

Invisible, We're Here

by Philip Buckland



A Frank Hurley mystery

Also in the Frank Hurley series:

The Cranston Occurrence

The Hiders

Lois Latham

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CHAPTER I

I was sitting inside my office and watching TV to pass the time while I was waiting for business to come my way.

The phone rang. I turned the TV off with the remote control, and then I picked up the receiver of my phone and said hello.

"Hello," a female voice said. "Is this Frank Hurley?"

"Speaking."

"Mr. Hurley, my name is Melissa Rollins. I was wondering. Can I make an appointment with you to talk to you about something?"

"Yes. You can do that. What's it about?"

"Well, I'd rather tell you about it when we meet. Can you come over to my place at one o'clock today, and then I'll tell you about it?"

"Yes. I can do that."

"Fine," Then Melissa told me where she

lived and how to get there, and I wrote this information down on the pad on my desk. After that, I spoke to Melissa again: "All right. I'll be at your place at one o'clock today for our meeting."

"Fine," Then Melissa hung up.

So did I. Then I wrote my appointment with Melissa down in my desk calendar, and then I looked at my watch. Ten o-three.

I had more than enough to find out what I can about Melissa. So I got on the computer. Melissa had been born and raised in Reno, Nevada, and she had lived in Reno for a long time. Then she had moved here to Bellingham, Washington, and she had lived here in Bellingham for a long time. She had worked at View Closed Circuit TV's as an accountant. Then one day she had been fired from View for making a mistake. Model citizen. Good credit rating. I liked that. Although I wondered how she was going to pay me--if I take whatever case she gives me. She had been fired from View. And I also

wondered why she would need to talk to a private investigator. Maybe her needing to talk to a private investigator had to do with her being fired from View. Or maybe her needing to talk to a private investigator had to do with something else. But whatever the reason was, I was going to find out.

After I found out what I needed to know about Melissa, I got on the computer to find out what I can about View. View was a company that was in the business of making, researching, developing, installing, servicing, and selling closed circuit TV's. View had been in business for a long time. It was still in business. It was still going strong.

After I had finished finding out what I had wanted to know about View, I turned the computer off. But I didn't turn the printer on. I wasn't going to print out the information I had gotten on Melissa and View. No sense opening a file on the case since I hadn't kept my appointment with Melissa yet, and I may have to turn down whatever case Melissa

gives me when she talks to me about whatever it was that she wants to talk to me about. It'll depend upon what the case is, or what I can do for her, or both. Then I looked at my watch again. Ten fourteen.

I had time to continue watching TV. So I turned the TV on with the remote control and continued watching TV and kept track of time.

At eleven o'clock, I got hungry. But since it looked like I wasn't going to have time to go somewhere and get something to eat because of when my appointment with Melissa was, I was going to have to improvise and eat here at my office. I had the facilities for eating and sleeping here at my office; small bedroom, kitchenette, small bathroom. And I used these facilities whenever I had some reason for eating or sleeping here at my office. And these facilities were behind a door marked PRIVATE, and the door marked PRIVATE was behind my desk. I turned the TV off with the remote control and put the remote control

inside the top drawer of my desk, and then I unlocked the door that lead into the facilities for eating and sleeping here at my office, and then I went through the door, and then I withdrew a couple of tuna fish sandwiches and a bottle of Coke from the small refrigerator in the kitchenette, and then I went into the bedroom and turned on the TV and sat on the bed and watched TV and ate the sandwiches and sipped the Coke and kept track of time.

When it was time for me to go, I turned the TV off and left the facilities for eating and sleeping here at my office, and then I stepped into my office, and then I closed and locked the door that lead into the facilities for eating and sleeping here at my office, and then I stepped out of my office and closed and locked the door, and then I got into my Dodge and started it up, and then I left my office and drove over to Melissa's place.

Melissa's place was on James Street. It was a nice small white two story house with a gun

metal blue roof and a matching garage.

I knocked on the front door of Melissa's place.

A few seconds later, the door opened.

Standing inside the house with a woman. She was tall, slender, had long, thick blonde hair pouring down her tapering oval shaped head, dark blue eyes, a straight nose, a creamy pallor complexion, thin champagne pink lips, and she was wearing a long sleeve white blouse, a black skirt, flesh tone stockings, and shiny black high heel shoes.

"Melissa Rollins?" I asked her.

"Yes. I'm Melissa Rollins," she said.

"Ms Rollins, I'm Frank Hurley. We talked on the phone this morning--"

"Oh, yes," she said. Then she stepped aside to let me come in. Then she spoke to me again: "Won't you come in."

"Thank you," I said. Then I went in and she closed the door.

"I'm very pleased to meet you, Mr. Hurley," she then said to me, and shook

hands with me. Her grip was firm but pleasant.

"I'm very pleased to meet *you*, Ms Rollins," I said to Melissa.

"Would you like some coffee?"

"All right."

"How do you take it?"

"Black, please."

"I'll be back with the coffee. You can go into the living room and wait for me there."

"All right," Then I went into the living room, and Melissa went into the kitchen to get the coffee.

I sat down on the sugar brown couch here inside the living room and looked all around me.

The living room was small, but spacious, and it was white with a champagne white carpet, and in front of the couch was a shiny black coffee table, and opposite the couch and the coffee table were blonde wood cabinets against the walls. In the cabinets were various things of interest. And a TV and

combination VCR and DVD player and videocassettes and DVD's were between the cabinets.

On the walls of the living room were paintings and pictures of various things, and some movie and musical posters.

Melissa came into the living room with two cups of coffee and sat down on the couch next to me and gave me *my* cup of coffee. Then we sipped our coffee.

"Now, Ms Rollins," I said to her. "What can I do for you?"

"I understand that you look into anything secret or illegal." Melissa said to me.

"That's right. I do."

"Well, I used to work at a place called View as an accountant," Then Melissa told me what View did. "Then one day I was fired," Melissa continued. "According to Art Colby, the manager of View, I was drinking on the job. And he had the evidence to prove it: a ledger with sloppy bookkeeping work in it that he said I did. But I know I hadn't been

drinking on the job. I think that Art said I was drinking on the job to get rid of me. Because I saw something, something that he didn't want me to see: some boxes. I saw them one day in a room. I was walking to and from the locker room and got something, and as I went back to work, I noticed the boxes. They were unmarked. Then at another time when I had been walking to and from the locker room and got something else, I saw more of these boxes inside the same room, and then, at another time when I had been walking to and from the locker room and got something else, I noticed the door to the room the boxes were in was closed and locked; I also found out that there was no record of these boxes. I told Art about it, but he told me to forget it. It wasn't important. And then, a few days later, he fired me for drinking on the job and showed me the evidence that said I was drinking on the job, and then he told me to sign my termination card and clean out my locker and leave and don't come back and

that my pay check and any other money I had coming to me will be mailed to me. And so I signed my termination card and cleaned out my locker and left and my pay check and the other money I had coming to me *was* mailed to me. And I haven't gone back to View ever since then."

"Probably because he doesn't want you to go back to View. He's afraid you'll find out about those boxes you saw and find out why there was no record of those boxes. If this is the case, he'll be prepared for you. He'll have some way of keeping you from finding out about those boxes and why there's no record of them. He might use that evidence he said he had that says you were drinking on the job. He'll show it to you and have you thrown off the premises, or, if you're with someone, he'll show *that* person and you the evidence and have him and you thrown off the premises. It'd be your word against his."

"Yeah," Melissa agreed reluctantly.

"Whatever's inside those boxes must not

be something good if Art's keeping you from finding out about those boxes. Have you told the police about those boxes?"

"No, I haven't. If I did, and the police went with me to View, and then the police ask Art questions about those boxes, Art will deny anything about those boxes, and he could have someone back up whatever he says, and he'll hide those boxes."

"Of course. What about your union if you have one? Did you tell *them* about the boxes?"

"No, I haven't. For the same reason: the union could go to View and ask Art questions about the boxes, and Art could say he doesn't know anything about the boxes, and have someone back up whatever he says about the boxes, and hide the boxes."

"Yeah. What about Labor and Industries? Have told *them* about the boxes?"

"No. For the same reason. If *they* ask Art questions about the boxes, Art will say he doesn't know anything about the boxes, and someone will back up what he says about the

boxes, and hide the boxes."

"Yeah. What about the Better Business Bureau? Have you told *them* about the boxes?"

"No. For the same reason. If *they* went to View and asked Art questions about the boxes, Art could say he doesn't know anything about the boxes, and have someone back up what he says about the boxes, and hide the boxes."

"What about you? Did *you* go to View by yourself or with someone else and ask Art questions about the boxes, or did the someone else ask Art questions about the boxes?"

"No. For the same reason. If *I* went to View by myself or with someone else, and *I* asked Art questions about the boxes, or if the someone else asked Art questions about the boxes, Art could say he doesn't know about the boxes, and he could have someone back up what he says about the boxes, and hide the boxes."

"Yeah. And Art's discrediting you to keep from finding out about those boxes by saying he fired you for drinking on the job is better than killing you. If he killed you to keep you from finding out about those boxes, your death would make people wonder; they might even look into your death."

"Yeah," Melissa agreed reluctantly.

"I imagine you'd like for *me* find out about those boxes?"

"Yes, I would. And I'd also like to know if Art *did* fire me to keep me from finding out about those boxes. And if he's working with someone else on these boxes, I want to know who that person is. And if we find these things out, then we can tell the police."

"Of course. I hate to bring this up, Ms Rollins, but how are you going to pay me? You were fired from your job, you know."

"Yes, I know. But I have money. Lots of it. And I have a money market account, too. You check this if you want."

"That won't be necessary. After we talked

on the phone? I ran a check on you. You have a good credit rating."

Melissa smiled.

"So I can and will take the assignment."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Hurley."

"You're welcome, Ms Rollins. My fee is twenty five dollars an hour," Then I took my pen and notebook out of my pocket and spoke to Melissa again: "Now. Do you know where Art lives?"

"Yes, I do," Then Melissa told me and I wrote Colby's address down in my notebook.

"Do you know his phone number?" was my next question.

Melissa told me and I wrote it down in my notebook.

"Do you know what kind of car he drives?"

"Yes, I do," Then Melissa told me what kind of car Colby drove and I wrote it down in my notebook.

"By any chance did you see the license plate number of his car?" I then asked Melissa.

"No, I didn't,"

I didn't write *that* down in my notebook. Then I spoke to Melissa again: "I'm afraid I'm going to have to find out what you want me to find out some other way. If *I* go over to View, by myself or with you or with someone else, and you, or the someone else, or I, ask Art questions about the boxes, he could say he doesn't know about the boxes, or worse, he could also show us the evidence that says you were drinking on the job, and have someone back up what he says, and hide the boxes. And while I look into what you want me to look into, you continue staying away from View. And if you have to call me to talk to me about something, call me at my office or at home or on my cell phone. Don't call me at View. I don't want our phone conversations to be overheard at View." Then I wrote down in my notebook my home and cell phone numbers and gave them to Melissa. Melissa looked at them.

"Anything else, Ms Rollins?" I then asked

Melissa.

"No," Melissa said. "I think that's it."

"All right. I'll be in touch. And thank you for the coffee."

"You're welcome," she said, smiling.

Then I left Melissa's place and got into my car and drove back to the office so I could open a file on the case before I start my assignment.

My office was on Cornwall Avenue.

I was here at my office now. I sat behind my desk and took a folder out of one of the drawers of my desk and wrote ROLLINS TERMINATION CASE on it. Since Melissa had been fired from her job. Then I turned the computer on and looked up the information on Melissa and View I had found yesterday, and then I turned on the printer and printed out the information on Melissa and View and put it into the folder, and then I got back on the computer to find out what I can about Colby: he had been born and raised here in Bellingham, and he had lived here in

Bellingham all of his life. He still lived here in Bellingham. He *was* the manager of View. Respected. Good credit rating. Then I printed out the information on Colby and put *that* into the folder. After that, I turned the computer and the printer off and looked at my watch. One nineteen.

I had time to think about how I was going to attack the case. So I started thinking about how I was going to attack the case.

CHAPTER II

A few days later, I was here at View and inside Colby's office. I had thought about how I was going to attack the case and had gotten ready to attack the case. Now Colby was sitting behind his big maple desk, and I was sitting in front of his desk, and the both of us were having my interview for the job I had applied for: handyman. I was going to need to work undercover on my assignment. That was why I had applied for the job of handyman here at View.

Colby's office was big and spacious, and it was cream white, with a goldenrod carpet, and opposite Colby's desk and against the wall was a tall, rectangular blond wood cabinet. On either side of the cabinet, and decorating all of the walls of Colby's office,

were some pictures of some events that Colby had undertaken, and lining all of the walls of Colby's office was the kind of office equipment and furniture that Colby in his job as manager of View.

At the end of the job interview, Colby and I stood up, and when Colby wasn't looking, I put a bug underneath the top of Colby's desk. I was able to do that now. I wasn't able to search his office and tap his office phone right now. Because of this, I wasn't going to have to search his office and tap his office phone when I can. Then Colby and I shook hands. Colby's grip was pleasant yet firm.

"Welcome aboard," Colby said to me, smiling. I had gotten the job.

"Thank you," I said. I smiled, too.

"Now I'll take you on the guided tour of View."

Then Colby and I left Colby's office so Colby could take me on the guided tour of View.

Colby was tall, lean, had blond hair and a

matching mustache that split his slightly tanned and stern face in two, dark green eyes, and he was wearing a green suit, a light yellow shirt, a black tie, and black leather shoes.

Colby was taking me on the guided tour of View now. One of the places we walked by, but didn't go into, was the research department of View. Colby told me that the work that the research department was doing was top secret. Even Colby couldn't tell me what it was that Research wasn't working on. Then we passed up Research and moved on. But I was going to have to see what it was that Research was doing. Maybe it had to do with what it was that Melissa wanted to know, or maybe it had to do with something.

Another place that Colby showed me in the course of his giving me the guided tour of View was the accounting department. Here I met a girl named Darlene Kerr. She was a new accountant here in Accounting. She told me that she had replaced the other girl who had

worked in Accounting. Although she didn't tell me who it was that she had replaced, or why she had replaced her, and I didn't ask her. This wasn't the time to ask her. But my guess was that the girl she had replaced was Melissa.

Darlene was tall, plump, had long, thick brown hair, brown eyes, a creamy tan complexion, a crooked nose, small, thin beige lips, and she was wearing a pearl necklace and a red waist length coat and a matching tight fitting skirt and flesh tone stockings and shiny black high heel shoes.

After I met and talked with Darlene, Colby and I moved along so Colby could continue taking me on the guided tour of View.

Colby and I were standing outside the main building of View now. Colby had finished taking me on the guided tour of View. Now he asked me when I can go to work. I asked him what time I'm supposed to start, and he told me, and then I asked him what time I quit, and he told me. Then I told

him I'll be here tomorrow morning at the time he said I start working at and go to work, and then he and I shook hands. After that, Colby went back into the main building, where his office was, so he could go back to work, and I went into the parking lot and got into my car and started it up and drove away from View and went over to a place that sold the kind of work clothes that a handyman wears and bought the clothes, and then I went over to my office. I was going to need to write a summary of everything I had seen at View, and the people I had met at View, and why I had applied for the job of handyman at View. I also took out of my pocket the radio to the bug I had put inside Colby's office and put it on the front seat of my car and listened to it. But so far I didn't hear anything going on inside Colby's office that had to do with what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Not even a conversation.

I also thought about Darlene. She had said that she had replaced the other girl who had

worked at View. Although she hadn't mentioned the girl's name or why she had replaced her. But it had to be Melissa that she had been talking about. It couldn't be any of the other accountants who worked in Accounting. They were still working in Accounting. But still, I wondered. This Darlene must have started working at View right after Colby had fired Melissa. Maybe it had to do with what Melissa wanted to know, or, maybe it had to do with something else. But just because Darlene had started working at View right after Colby had fired Melissa didn't mean that his hiring Darlene right after he had fired Melissa had to do with what Melissa wanted to know. It was too soon to say if Colby had hired Darlene to replace Melissa after he had fired Melissa had to do with what Melissa wanted to know. All I had to go on now was something I was wondering about. And because of this, I was going to refrain from investigating Darlene until or unless she says or does something or both

that would have to do with what Melissa wanted to know.

I was here at my office now. Sitting behind my desk and writing that summary of everything I had seen at View, and the people I had met at View, and why I had applied for the job of handyman at View. Then I turned on the printer and printed out the summary and put it into the file on the Rollins termination case, and then I turned the computer and the printer off and looked at my watch. Eleven twenty- eight.

I had time to call Melissa and tell her what I had done at View today and why I had done it, although I didn't have anything to report right now. I did that. Then I looked at my watch again. Eleven thirty-six.

There were some other things about my assignment that I could do until five o'clock tonight. At five o'clock tonight, I was going to go over to View and follow Colby from View and watch whatever he does. When Colby had taken me on the guided tour of View, he

had told me that everyone who worked at View started working at eight, and quit working at five. The other things about my assignment that I could do until five o'clock tonight were go get something to eat. I was getting hungry. And then go get some food for tonight's work. I might get hungry while I put Colby under surveillance. Then go home and rest up for tonight's work. I was going to need to do that. So I put the file on the Rollins termination case into the filing cabinet and locked up the cabinet, and then I left the office so I could go do those other things about my assignment that I could do until five o'clock tonight.

The Teriyaki Bar was in downtown Bellingham on Holly Street. It was a wonderful Japanese restaurant. I had eaten there before. It was another good place I liked to eat.

I was here at the Teriyaki Bar now. I was in the mood to eat here again. I was sitting at the table and eating my usual spicy chicken

and rice and washing it down with Coke.

I felt better after I had eaten. Now I was having more Coke. Then I finished my Coke and left the Teriyaki Bar and went over to the store and bought some groceries and went home.

Home was on Liberty Street.

When I got here, I put the groceries away and got undressed and took a shower, and then I got into my pajamas and set the alarm clock for a time I wanted to get up at later today, and then I put my Smith and Wesson .38 Special underneath the pillow, and then I got into bed and went to sleep so I could rest up for tonight's work.

It was getting dark now out. Slowly but surely, the dark was replacing the light.

View was on Lincoln Street. It was a vast cluster of buildings that housed the operations of View.

I arrived here at View at four forty-three and pulled up to the curb and a few feet away from View and parked my car here. Then I

watched View to see Colby leave View and kept track of time; I also got hungry, so I pulled a tuna fish sandwich and a bottle of Coke of the bag of groceries and ate the sandwich and sipped the Coke while I watched View.

At five o'clock, I saw everyone driving out of View and going in different directions. Then I saw Colby drive out of View, and then I started up my car and pulled away from the curb and followed Colby and watched what he did.

I followed Colby to the Five Columns, a wonderful Greek and Italian restaurant here on Samish Way. I had eaten here before, but it looked like I wasn't going to eat there *this* time: I saw Colby park his tan Honda in the parking lot of the Five Columns and go into the Five Columns and sit down at a booth next to the window. Then I looked at my watch. So it looked like Colby was going to have dinner at the Five Columns. Because of this, I drove by the Five Columns and looked

for the nearest cross street so I could park my car there, and then watch the Five Columns.

I found that cross street and turned onto it and parked my car here. Then I got out my voice recorder and recorded my seeing Colby going into the Five Columns and when he had gone into the Five Columns. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and took my binoculars out of the glove compartment and looked through them and at the Five Columns to see what Colby was doing now: he *was* having dinner. Then I put the binoculars back into the glove compartment and continued watching the Five Columns and kept track of time.

About two hours later, I saw Colby walk out of the Five Columns and get into his car and leave the Five Columns. I looked at my watch. Then I started up *my* car and followed Colby and watched what he did; I also got out my voice recorder and recorded my seeing Colby walk out of the Five Columns and get into his car and leave the Five Columns and

when I had seen his doing it.

I followed Colby to *his* place and saw him go into it. I looked at my watch. Then I drove passed his place and parked my car a few feet away from his place and across the street from his place and watched his place and got out my voice recorder and recorded the fact that I had seen Colby go to his place and when I had seen his doing it. Then I put my recorder away and continued watching Colby's place; I also realized that I was going to have to search Colby's place and bug it and tap his landline phone there at the first opportunity. I wasn't going to be able to do those things right now. Maybe what I'll find in his place will tell me if it has to do what with Melissa wanted to know, or maybe what I'll find in his place will tell me if it has to do with something else.

Colby's place was here on Garden Street. It was a nice big brown one story house with a blue-gray roof and a matching garage.

A few hours had gone by, but nothing had

happened at Colby's place. It looked like Colby was still at home. He hadn't left his place. Then I saw the light inside his place go off. I looked at my watch and got out my voice recorder and recorded what I had seen the light in his place do, and when I had seen it do it. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and thought. Maybe Colby was going to bed now. Probably because he was going to work tomorrow, and because of that, he was going to need to get a good night's sleep for it. And then I realized that I'd better go home and get some sleep myself. Since I was going to start working at View tomorrow. And because of this, I was going to need to get a good night's sleep for it; not only that, I didn't think that there was going to be anything wrong with discontinuing the surveillance on Colby tonight since maybe Colby was going to bed right now. So I started up my car and pulled away from the curb and went home and went to bed.

The next day, I got up early and went over

to the office and wrote my surveillance report on Colby and put it into the file on the Rollins termination case. Then I looked at my watch. Eight twenty- three.

It was time now for me to go to View and go to work. So I put the file on the Rollins termination case into the filing cabinet, and then I locked up the cabinet, and then I left the office and got into my car and started it up and drove over to View.

CHAPTER III

I was here at View now. Working. Doing one of the things that a handyman did: which was walk around the place to see what needed to be done. I was doing this to disguise my finding out what Melissa wanted to know.

Then, when I came to the main building, I walked into it to go to the room the boxes were in and start my investigation there.

When I reached the room, I looked around to see if the coast were clear or not. It was clear. No one was around. Then I took my X-ray glasses out of my pocket and put them on and looked through the wall of the room the boxes were in. Then I saw a cabinet with some boxes on one of the shelves of the cabinet. I counted the boxes. There were eleven of them. Then I noticed that the boxes *were* unmarked like Melissa had said, and the

boxes were taped down. There was nothing else inside the room. Then I took my gloves out of my pocket and put them on, and then I turned the knob of the door of the room the boxes were in to see if the door were locked or not. It was locked. Then I took my lock pick set out of my pocket and picked the lock of the door of the room, and then I went into the room and closed and locked the door. Then I went over to the boxes to see what was inside them: closed circuit TV's with control panels. I wondered about this: closed circuit TV's with control panels? And they were here inside this room and not inside the warehouse.

Yesterday, when Colby had taken me on the guided tour of View, two of the departments of View he had showed me were Manufacturing and the warehouse. At that time, I had seen the people inside Manufacturing make and box regular closed circuit TV's and not these closed circuit TV's with the control panels and put them in boxes

and put them in the warehouse. I hadn't seen them make the closed circuit TV's with the control panels and put *them* into the boxes and then put them into the warehouse. Which meant that perhaps some other people must be making the closed circuit TV's with the control panels and putting them in boxes and putting them into the room the boxes were in. But why? I was going to have to find that out. But whatever the reason was, it must not be legal what they were doing if Colby had fired Melissa to keep Melissa from finding out about those boxes. And if Colby *had* fired Melissa to keep Melissa from finding out about the boxes, then Colby must be working with these people who were making the closed circuit TV's with the control panels and putting them in this room and not in the warehouse. And if these people *were* making these closed circuit TV's with the control panels and putting them into this room and not in the warehouse, then that would mean that Colby and these other people didn't want

to put these TV's with the control panels on the market. Instead, they must want to use these closed circuit TV's with the control panels for some other reason. And they didn't want anyone to know what that reason was. I took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had seen inside the boxes and everything else I had seen inside this room. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and looked at the wall on the other side of the room to see if the coast were clear or not. It was time now for me to leave the room. I had finished finding out what I had needed to find out here. Now it was time for me to continue my investigation somewhere else.

The coast was clear. No one was outside the room and in the hall. Then I took walked out of the room and closed and locked the door. Then I took my X-ray glasses and my gloves off and put them back into my pocket and left the room the boxes were in.

The research department was here in the main building of View, too. I came to it and

looked around to see if the coast were clear or not. It was clear. No one was here. Then I took my X-ray glasses out of my pocket and put them on and looked through the wall of the research department to see what was going on inside Research. People wearing smocks were examining closed circuit TV's. But I couldn't tell if these closed circuit TV's they were examining were regular closed circuit TV's, or if they were the closed circuit TV's with the control panels. I didn't see these people doing anything else. I only saw them examining the closed circuit TV's. Then I took my gloves out of my pocket and put them on, and then, as slowly and silently as I could, I turned the knob of the door of the research department to see if the door were locked or not. It was locked. Which meant the people inside Research didn't want to be disturbed. And Colby had told me that they *were* working on something top secret. Maybe the closed circuit TV's they were working on were the closed circuit TV's with the control

panels. Or maybe it was something else. But I was going to have to find out which it was later. Right now wasn't the time for me to find out which it was. Because of this I took my X-ray glasses and my gloves off and put them back into my pocket and left Research. I didn't record what I had seen in Research. I didn't know if what the researchers were examining were regular closed circuit TV's, or if they were the closed circuit TV's with the control panels.

I continued walking around the plant. But so far I didn't find anything else that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know.

At eleven o'clock I walked out into the parking lot to take my break. It was break time now.

I was sitting in my car now. Eating a tuna sandwich and sipping a bottle of Coke I had taken out of the bag of groceries. I held off on calling Melissa and telling her what I had found out about the boxes. I wanted to tell her about the boxes after work instead of

right now. I may have more to tell her about the boxes before the day is through.

At the end of my break, I went back to work. But so far I didn't find anything else that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know.

At one o'clock, I was walking passed the main building, still doing my job, and then I saw Colby and his secretary, Denise Bainbridge, walking out of the building. Colby was wearing a light brown suit and a lime green shirt and a black tie and black leather shoes, and Denise was tall, slender, had long, thick red hair, light green eyes, a creamy pallor complexion, a bland face, and she was wearing a yellow waist length coat and matching skirt and a white turtleneck sweater and flesh tone stockings and shiny yellow high heels shoes, and her left hand was grasping the strap of her shiny yellow shoulder strap handbag, which was resting on her left shoulder.

They stopped and talked to me. Although

we didn't talk very long. We just talked to each other just long enough to ask each other how we were and we told each other we were fine, and then Colby told me that he and Denise were going to lunch. Then Colby and Denise left and went out into the parking lot and got into Colby's car and drove away from View.

Without hurrying so I won't arouse suspicion, I walked into the main building so I could go up to Colby's office and search it and tap his phone there. I had the opportunity to get into Colby's office and search it and tap his phone there now.

As I was reaching Colby's office, I looked around to make sure that no one would see me sneak into Colby's office. No one was here.

When I reached Colby's office, I took my X-ray glasses out of my pocket and put them on and looked through the wall of Colby's office. I was pretty sure that no one was inside Colby's office right now, since Colby had told me that he and Denise were going to lunch,

but, just in case. I saw the outer room of Colby's office. It was just as big and spacious as Colby's office, and it, too, was cream white with a goldenrod carpet, and in one corner of the room was a big maple desk and a matching chair behind the desk, and against one of the walls of the room was a big shiny leather couch, and before the couch was a glass coffee table, and against another wall of the room was a big shiny white leather couch.

No one was inside the outer room. So as quickly as I could, I took my gloves out of my pocket and put them on, and then I took my lock pick set out of my pocket and picked the lock of the door of Colby's office, and then I snuck into the office and closed and locked the door. After that, I went over to the door of Colby's office and looked through the wall of Colby's office. I was pretty sure that no one was inside Colby's office right now, since Colby had told me that he and Denise were going to lunch, but, just in case.

No one was inside Colby's office. So I

picked the lock of the door of Colby's office and went into Colby's office and closed and locked the door. After that, I put my lock pick set back into my pocket, and then I took my X-ray glasses off and put *them* back into my pocket, and then I took the phone tap out of my pocket and went over to Colby's phone and tapped the phone. Then I went over to Colby's desk to search that. I found a ledger inside one of the drawers of his desk. I opened it up to look inside it. It contained the sloppy bookkeeping work that Colby had said that Melissa had done. So he was still holding onto this. Just in case. I put the ledger back into the drawer after I had finished looking at it and looked through the rest of the drawers of the desk to see if the contents of *these* drawers could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. But they didn't. There was nothing inside *these* drawers that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. So the next thing I went to search was the tall, rectangular cabinet that was on the other side

of Colby's desk.

When I got to it, I opened up the doors of the cabinet to look inside the cabinet. Inside the cabinet, and on one of the shelves of the cabinet, a closed circuit TV. But it wasn't one of the closed circuit TV's with the control panels. Instead, it was a regular closed circuit TV. I turned it on. Then I saw it monitoring a room. There were things inside it that indicated that this room was a living room; a sofa, a coffee table, a TV, some pictures and paintings on the walls, some cabinets lining the walls. I was going to have to find out whose living room it was. Maybe it would have to do with what Melissa wanted to know. Or maybe it would have to do with something else. I turned the TV off and closed the doors of the cabinet and continued searching the office. But I didn't find anything else here that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorder what I had discovered here inside Colby's

office. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket, and then I took my X-ray glasses out of my pocket and put them on so I could see if the coast in the outer room were clear or not. It was. Then I stepped out of Colby's office and closed and locked the door, and then I looked through the wall of the outer room to see if the coast outside Colby's office and in the hall were clear or not. It was time now for me to leave Colby's office and continue my investigation somewhere else. I had finished searching Colby's office and tapped his phone.

The coast outside Colby's office and in the hall was clear. So I stepped out of the outer room and closed and locked the door, and then I took my X-ray glasses and my gloves off and put them in my pocket, and then I left Colby's office. Then I looked at my watch. One twenty-six.

I hadn't had lunch yet. So I'd better have it while I have the chance to have it. I went to the locker room and withdrew my bag of

groceries from my locker, and then I left the locker room and walked out of the main building and over to and into the parking lot and got into my car and pulled another tuna fish sandwich and another bottle of Coke out of the bag of groceries and ate the sandwich and sipped the Coke.

While I ate the sandwich and sipped the Coke, I also listened in on Colby's office. Although it *was* locked right now and Colby and Denise *were* away from View and having lunch right now.

After I had lunch, I went back to work. But I didn't find anything else that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know; I didn't even find anything new inside Research that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. I only saw the researchers doing the same thing they had done before. Maybe they had worked through lunch on what they were doing. Or maybe they had had lunch the same time I had had lunch, and then they had gone back to work

on what they were doing.

And I didn't find anything else that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know for the rest of the day, either. Now I was leaving View. So was everyone else. It was quitting time now. Then I took my cell phone out of my pocket and called Melissa and requested a meeting with her so I could tell her what I had found out today. Then she and I agreed on where and when we could have the meeting. Then she and I hung up, and then I put my cell phone back into my pocket.

CHAPTER IV

It was five thirty now, and Melissa and I were here inside my office, and I told Melissa everything I had found out today at View.

"Closed circuit TV's with control panels?" Melissa looked and sounded surprised after I had finished.

"You look and sound surprised," I said to Melissa. "Which means that you must not have known about these TV's with the control panels."

"No, I didn't"

"Well, I did want to ask you if you did know anything about these closed circuit TV's with the control panels, and it looks like you've answered my question. They must have been working on these closed circuit TV's with the control panels without your seeing or hearing their working on these

closed circuit TV's with the control panels."

"Yeah, they must have. But why would they make this kind of closed circuit TV's?"

"Probably because they want to use these kind of closed circuit TV's for something. But whatever the reason is that they have for using this kind of closed circuit TV's, it must not be legal if Art Colby's keeping you from finding out about those boxes."

"Yeah. And you also said that you found a regular closed circuit TV inside Art's office."

"That's right. I did." Then I told her again what the TV was monitoring.

Melissa nodded. "Yeah," she then said. "And you also said that you found the ledger that says I did this sloppy bookkeeping work inside Art's desk, too."

"That's right. I did."

Melissa nodded again and looked disappointed.

I hadn't told Melissa about what I had seen the people inside Research at View do. There was nothing about what they had done

to report to her. "But I'm afraid we still don't have any evidence about what's going on at View to show to the police," I then told Melissa.

"And because of that, I'd like for you to continue the investigation," Melissa told me. "We've still got to find out what's going on."

"All right. I'll continue the investigation."

Melissa smiled. "Thank you, Mr. Hurley,"

"You're welcome, Ms Rollins," I said and smiled at Melissa.

"Anything else, Mr. Hurley?"

"No. What about you?"

"No. I don't think there's anything else."

"All right,"

Then Melissa and I stood up and shook hands.

"I'll be in touch," I then told Melissa. "And thank you for coming in, Ms Rollins."

"You're welcome, Mr. Hurley. And thank *you* for telling me what you've found out so far.

"You're welcome, Ms Rollins."

Then Melissa left. She was wearing an off-white waist length coat and a matching skirt and a sky blue turtleneck sweater and flesh tone stockings and shiny white high heel shoes, and her right hand was grasping the strap of her shiny white shoulder strap handbag, which was resting on her right shoulder.

Then I looked at my watch. Five forty-eight.

I had time to write a summary of everything I had discovered at View today and about my meeting I had had with Melissa. So I sat down behind my desk and got on the computer and wrote the summary. After that, I turned the printer on and printed out the summary and put the summary into the file on the Rollins termination case. Then I looked at my watch again. Five fifty-nine.

I had the opportunity to call it a night and resume the investigation tomorrow. I was going to need to get some dinner and get a good night's sleep for tomorrow's work. So I

put the file on the Rollins termination case into the filing cabinet and locked up the cabinet, and then I left the office.

Pizza Hut was on Samish Way. It was a wonderful pizza restaurant. I had eaten there before. It was another place I liked to eat at.

I was here at Pizza Hut now. I was in the mood to eat at Pizza Hut again. I was sitting at a table and eating Tuscany pasta Marinara and washing it down with Coke.

I felt better after I had eaten. Then I paid the check and got into my car and left Pizza Hut and went home.

When I got home, I got undressed and took a shower, and then I went into *my* room and got into my pajamas and bathrobe and slippers, and then I went into the living room and watched TV until eleven o'clock.

At eleven o'clock, I turned the TV off and went into my room and turned on the light and set the alarm clock for a time I wanted to get up at tomorrow morning, and then I put my gun underneath the pillow, and then I

took off my bathrobe and slippers, and then I turned the light off and got into bed and went to sleep.

I was here at View the next day. Continuing the investigation. But so far I didn't find anything else that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know.

But it was different at Research. When I got here to Research, I looked around to make sure that the coast was clear. It was. Then I took my X-ray glasses out of my pocket and put them on, and then I looked through the wall of Research. No one was inside Research. I looked at my watch. One thirty.

The researchers must be having lunch now. This gave me the opportunity to sneak inside Research and look around. I took my gloves out of my pocket and put them on, and then I turned the knob of the door of Research to see if the door were locked or not. It was locked. Then I took my lock pick set out of my pocket and picked the lock of the door to Research and snuck into Research and

closed and locked the door behind me. Then I put my lock pick set back into my pocket, and then I took my X-ray glasses off and put them back into my pocket. Then I looked around the room.

The closed circuit TV's were still on the tables the researchers had sat at when they had examined the closed circuit TV's. But there was something different about some of the closed circuit TV's this time: they had control panels on them. Which meant that maybe the researchers were examining closed circuit TV's with control panels. That would explain some of the closed circuit TV's with the control panels being on the tables. And if the researchers were examining closed circuit TV's with control panels, then maybe they were manufacturing closed circuit TV's with the control panels, too. And if they were manufacturing closed circuit TVs' with control panels, then maybe the researchers were manufacturing the closed circuit TV's with the control panels somewhere else on

the plant and not in Manufacturing. That would explain why I hadn't seen the closed circuit TV's with the control panels being manufactured in Manufacturing. But if they *were* manufacturing the closed circuit TV's with the control panels somewhere else on the plant and not inside Manufacturing, and I hadn't seen this place the researchers were manufacturing the closed circuit TV's with the control panels in, then that would mean that maybe that room the researchers were manufacturing the closed circuit TV's with the control panels in was a hidden room. A room known only to Colby and the researchers and maybe someone else. And maybe the researchers were putting the closed circuit TV's with control panels into boxes after they manufacture them inside this hidden room, too. That would explain why I hadn't seen closed circuit TV's with control panels being put into boxes inside Manufacturing when Colby had taken me on the guided tour of View. And if they *were*

manufacturing and boxing closed circuit TV's with control panels inside a hidden room on the plant, then that would mean Colby and the researchers and maybe the someone else didn't want anyone to know what they were doing. Although I had seen closed circuit TV's with control panels inside that room that Melissa had told me about, and there were some closed circuit TV's in the lab that had control panels on them. And that had to be it: if Colby and the researchers and maybe the someone else *were* working on the closed circuit TV's with control panels secretly, and if Colby *were* keeping Melissa from finding out about those boxes, then it look like Colby and those researchers and perhaps the someone else *were* going to use these closed circuit TV's with the control panels for something, and whatever the something was, it wasn't legal.

I continued looking around the room. But I didn't find anything else here that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know. Then I

took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded everything I had discovered here inside the lab, and then I put my recorder back into my pocket, and then I took a bug out of my pocket and put it underneath one of the tables some of the researchers were working at. Then I noticed the office. I went over to it and turned the knob of the door of the office to see if the door were locked or not. It was locked. Then I got out my lock pick set and picked the lock of the door of the office and went into the office and closed and locked the door. After that, I put my lock pick set back into my pocket and searched the office. But I didn't find anything here inside the office. Although this may have told me something: there must not be any paperwork on the closed circuit TV's with the control panels. I only saw reports on the regular closed circuit TV's. Which meant that there must not be any record of the closed circuit TV's with the control panels. And that made sense: if there *were* a record of the closed

circuit TV's with the control panels, and someone saw it or discovered it, he'd wonder about it. Might even report. And Colby and the people working with him on these closed circuit TV's with the control panels couldn't have that. There'd be an investigation of there being no record of these circuit TV's with the control panels. Then I took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had just discovered here inside the office. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket, and then I took a bug out of my pocket and put it underneath the top of the desk here inside the office, and then I took a phone tap out of my pocket and tapped the phone here inside the office. I didn't find anything else here inside the office that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know, so I took my X-ray glasses out of my pocket and put them on and looked through one of the walls here inside the office. No one was in the lab. That was good. Then I stepped out of the office and closed and locked the door, and then I walked

over to the wall on the other side of the room and looked through it to see if the coast were clear or not. It was time now for me to leave Research and continue my investigation somewhere else. I had finished searching Research.

The coast was clear. No one was outside Research and inside the hall. Then I stepped out of Research and closed and locked the door, and then I took my X-ray glasses and my gloves off and put them in my pocket. Then I left Research.

For the rest of the day, I continued my investigation, but so far I didn't find anything else that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know.

Shortly before quitting time, I went out into the parking lot without being seen or heard and went over to Colby's car and went behind his car and put a homing device on the back of the license plate that was on the back of the car. I had a feeling that I was going to need to find him after we get off

work, and then follow him. He might see me following him when we drive out of the plant, or, I may not see him after we get off work. Because of these reasons, I was going to have to improvise on following him without his seeing my following him or if I don't see him after we get off work. I was going to follow him and watch what he does after work again. Then I picked the lock of the door on the driver's side of Colby's car, and then I got into the front seat of Colby's car and put a bug underneath the dashboard of Colby's car and near the steering wheel of Colby's car, and then I searched the front seat of Colby's car, but I didn't find anything in the front seat of Colby's car that could tell me anything else about what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I got out of the car and locked the door on the driver's side of Colby's car, and then I picked the lock of the door of the back seat of Colby's car, and then I got into the back seat and searched the back seat. But I didn't find anything in the back seat that

could tell me anything else about what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I got out of the car and closed and locked the door, and then I went over to the trunk of the car and picked the lock of the door of the trunk, and then I opened the trunk and looked inside. But I didn't find anything *here* that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know. Then I closed and locked the door of the trunk and left Colby's car and left the parking lot and walked back onto the premises and went back to work.

I didn't find anything else that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know before quitting time.

It *was* quitting time now, and it was getting dark now, and now everyone was leaving View--including Colby and me. I saw Colby turn onto the street and drive down it, and *I* went in the opposite direction when *I* turned onto the same street that Colby had turned onto. Then I turned onto the nearest cross street and took the radio to the homing

device out of my pocket and turned it on and looked at it. There were three arrows on the homing device. The one in the middle was flashing. Then I turned around and drove back to the street that Colby had turned onto and turned onto that street and drove in the same direction I had seen Colby go in when I had seen him leave View.

I followed him to the Five Columns again and saw him go into the Five Columns again and saw him sit at a booth again. So it looked like he was going to have dinner at the Five Columns again. I looked at my watch.

I went to the same cross street I had gone to before and parked my car here again and watched Colby. Then I took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had seen Colby do and when I had seen his doing it. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and continued watching the restaurant. I also got hungry, so I took another tuna sandwich and another bottle of Coke of the bag of groceries and ate the

sandwich and sipped the Coke.

About two hours later, it got dark. I saw Colby walk out of the Five Columns and get into his car and leave the Five Columns. I looked at my watch. Then I started up *my* car and followed Colby and watched what he did.

I followed him to his place and saw him go into his place. So it looked like he was going to stay home again tonight. I looked at my watch. Then I drove passed Colby's place and parked my car on the other side of the street from Colby's place, and a few yards away from Colby's place. Then I got out my voice recorder and recorded what I had seen Colby do at his place, and when I had seen his doing it. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and watched Colby's place.

A few hours had gone by, and nothing had happened. It looked like Colby had been staying in again tonight. He hadn't gone out. Then I saw a light inside Colby's place being turned off. The light must have come from the TV. If so, Colby must have been watching

TV. And now maybe Colby was going to go to bed now. Probably because he was going to go to work tomorrow. Because of that, he was going to need to get a good night's sleep. I looked at my watch and took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had seen the light do. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and started up my car and pulled away from the curb and drove down the street and went home and went to bed. I knew that I had the chance to go home and get a good night's sleep for tomorrow's work; not only that, I didn't think that there wasn't going to be anything wrong with my discontinuing the surveillance on Colby tonight since it looked like he was going to go to bed.

The next few days, I didn't find anything else that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then one morning I was here at home and in my den and watching TV while I was sipping coffee before I have breakfast and get dressed and go to

work again. I also listened in on Colby's office. The radio to the bug I had put inside his office, and the radio to the tap I had put inside Colby's office phone, were on my coffee table. Then, I heard something. It was coming from inside Colby's office. I looked at my watch. Quickly I scooped up the remote control and turned the TV off, and then I turned on the voice recorder, which was on the coffee table, too. Then I looked at my watch and listened in on what I was hearing inside Colby's office.

I heard Colby dialing a phone number. The screen on the radio to the tap I had put inside Colby's office displayed the phone number of the person that Colby was calling. Quickly I wrote down on the pad on the coffee table the phone number that was displayed on the screen of the radio to the tap I had put inside Colby's office and continued listening in on Colby's office.

"Hello," a male voice said.

"Hello," Colby said. "Van?"

"Yeah?"

"It's Art, Van,"

"Art. How are ya doing?"

"Fine. You?"

"Fine."

"I thought I'd let you know that those other kind of closed circuit TV's we talked about are ready. You and the gang can come over and get them any time. But I think that you and the gang should come over and get them in groups and at different times instead of all at once and at the same time. That way, people driving by View, or walking by View, won't wonder what's going on."

"That sounds like a good idea. We'll do that."

"Great,"

"Thanks for telling me those closed circuit TV's are ready."

"No problem. See ya later, Van."

"See ya later, Art,"

Then Colby and this Van hung up. Then I looked at my watch and took my voice

recorder off of the coffee table and recorded what I heard Colby and this Van had talked about on the phone, and when I heard them start talking on the phone. Then I put my recorder back on the coffee table and looked at the screen on the radio to the tap I had put inside Colby's office phone to see what the phone number of the person Colby had called was. Then I saw the phone number and scooped up the pad I had written the phone number down on and got out of my recliner chair and went over to my desk, and then I looked up the phone number of this Van in my crisscross directory to find out who the phone number belonged to: it did belong to a man named Van. And Van's last name was Mears. Then I got on the computer to find out what I can about Mears: he had been born and raised here in Bellingham, and he had lived here in Bellingham all of his life. He was an electrician. And he worked at a shop here in Bellingham called the Eshop. It was in the business of repairing and selling and buying

electric things. Good citizen. Good credit rating. Then I turned the printer on and printed out the information on Mears and put the information on the desk, and then I wrote a surveillance report on the phone conversation that Colby and Mears had had, and then I printed *that* out and put *that* on the desk. Then I turned the computer and the printer off and looked at the clock on my desk. Six thirty-eight.

I had time before I go to work. But because of what I had just heard Colby and Mears talk about on the phone, I decided to call in sick so I could search Colby's place and Mears's place and bug their places and tap their phones there and put Mears under surveillance. Judging from what I had heard Colby and Mears talk about on the phone, they may be talking about those closed circuit TV's with the control panels. Colby had advised Mears that Mears and his gang go over to View and get these closed circuit TV's in groups and at different times instead of all

at once and at the same time so no one outside View, who drove by View, or walked by View, would wonder. So I went back to my chair and sat down in it and continued sipping my coffee and continued watching TV, and then I went into the kitchen and made a delicious bacon and scrambled egg breakfast, and then I went back into the den and ate my breakfast here, and continued watching TV and sipping coffee, and after I had eaten, I continued drinking coffee and continued watching TV until it was time for me to "call in sick."

At that time, I called View and told Colby I wasn't going to make it to work. Chest cold.

"Oh, that's too bad," he said.

"Yeah, it is," I said.

"I hope it's not too bad,"

"No. I don't think it is. The more I stay in bed, the faster it'll go away."

"Do that."

"I will,"

"Anything else?"

"No, that's it."

"O.K., then. Get well soon."

"I will,"

"Bye,"

"Bye,"

Then Colby and I hung up.

Great, I thought, I just bought the time I needed. Now I'll be able to do what I decided to do today. Then I looked at my watch. Six fifty-six.

I was time now for me to do what I had decided to do today. So I turned off the TV with the remote control and got out of my chair and went over to the desk and collected the report on the phone conversation that Colby and Mears had had, and the information I had gotten on Mears. I was going to need to take the report on the phone conversation that Colby and Mears had had, and the information I had gotten on Mears, with me and put the report on the phone conversation that Colby and Mears had had, and the information I had gotten on Mears,

into the file on the Rollins termination case if I get to the office today. Then I left the den and went into *my* room and got dressed and left my place.

CHAPTER V

I got to the office and put the report on the phone conversation that Colby and Mears had had, and the information I had gotten on Mears, into the file on the Rollins termination case, and then I put the file back into the filing cabinet, and then I locked up the cabinet and left the office and went over to Colby's place.

When I got here to Colby's place, I parked my car on the other side of the street and a few feet away from his place, and then I turned up the collar of my coat, and then I took a baseball cap out from underneath the front seat of my car and put it on, and then I opened up the glove compartment and took my sun glasses out of the glove compartment and put them on and closed the glove compartment. If Colby had a closed circuit TV

inside his place, I was going to need to be prepared for it. Then I got out of my car and crossed the street and went over to Colby's place and knocked on the door. No answer. I knocked on the door again. Again, no answer. I knocked on the door some more. But again, there was no answer. Then I looked around me to make sure that no one was going to see me sneak into Colby's place.

No one did. Then I took my gloves out of my pocket and put them on, and then I took my lock pick set out of my pocket and picked the lock of the front door of Colby's place and went into Colby's place and closed and locked the door. Then I put my lock pick set back into my pocket and looked all around me.

The room I was standing in now was the living room. It was big and spacious and wide and white, with a sugar brown carpet, and against one wall was a long shiny black sofa with a matching coffee table before the sofa, and on one side of the sofa was a black recliner chair, and a small maple table next to

the chair, and on the table were a beige phone and a brown answering machine. And on the walls were paintings and pictures of various animals and landscapes and seascapes, and opposite the sofa and the coffee table were cabinets with a TV and a combination VCR and DVD player and videocassettes and DVD's and a turntable and records and a radio and audiocassette player and audiocassettes and a CD player and CD's on some of the cabinets, and on the other cabinets were some books and other things of interest. I also saw in one corner of the ceiling a very small lens. I walked over to the other side of the room to look at the room from the lens's point of view. Then, I saw something: the same thing that the closed circuit TV inside Colby's office was monitoring. So it looked like Colby was monitoring his place from his office. But it didn't look like Colby wasn't monitoring his home phone and answering machine from his office. I liked that. I smiled. I went over to the phone and

tapped it. Then I looked around the place. But so far I didn't find anything that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know.

I was here inside Colby's basement now. It was big and wide and had a concrete floor and had a long bench and shelves and tools hanging on the walls, and a vice on the bench, and also on the bench was another closed circuit TV. I turned it on. Then I saw the same thing on *this* closed circuit TV that I had seen on the other closed circuit TV inside Colby's office: Colby's living room. So Colby was monitoring his living room from *this* closed circuit TV here inside the basement as well as he was monitoring his living room from his office. But I didn't see *this* closed circuit TV inside the basement monitoring the phone and answering inside Colby's living room. I liked this. I smiled. Then I turned the TV off and looked around the basement. But I didn't find anything inside the basement that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I put a bug underneath the

bench, and then I continued searching the rest of Colby's place. But I didn't find anything in it that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I snuck out of Colby's place and got back into my car and started it up and left Colby's place and got out my voice recorder and recorded what I had found at Colby's place. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and thought. If Colby were monitoring his living room from work, as well as he was monitoring it from his basement, and if he had been monitoring his living room from work while I had been searching his place, then why hadn't he called the police? I wondered about this. Maybe he hadn't monitored his living room while he was at work. Maybe he had been doing something else at that time. Or maybe he monitored his living room whenever he was in his basement doing something. Or, maybe it was something else.

Mears's place was on Texas Street. It was a nice one story forest green house with a

brown roof and a matching garage.

I arrived here at Mears's place and parked my car across the street from Mears's place. I got a good view of Mears's garage. Then, I looked around me to make sure that no one was going to see what I was going to do. No one did. No one was around. Then I took my X-ray glasses out of my pocket and put them on and looked into Mears's garage to see if Mears's car were. Although I didn't know what kind of car Mears drove. I didn't see a car inside Mears's garage. That was good. It gave me the opportunity to sneak inside Mears's house and search it. I did.

I was driving away from Mears's place now. I had searched it and bugged it and tapped his phone there. Now I was recording what I had found at Mears's place that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know: nothing. Nothing that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know.

The Eshop was on Woburn Street. I parked my car across the street from the

Eshop and watched it. I realized that Mears maybe working today.

About four hours later, I saw Mears walk out of the shop. He was tall, stringy, had black hair, a tapering dimply face, and he was wearing a black windbreaker and a light blue shirt and gray pants and black tennis shoes.

He got into his black Chrysler and drive out of the shop and turn onto the street and drive down the street. I looked at my watch. Then I started up *my* car and followed Mears and took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had seen Mears do, and when I had seen his doing it.

I saw Mears go over to Shari's, a wonderful restaurant on Meridian Street. I had eaten here before. Although it looked like I wasn't going to eat here again this time. Then I saw Mears turn into the parking lot of Shari's and park his car behind Shari's and go into Shari's. So it looked like Mears was going to have lunch. It was that time. I looked at my watch and took my voice recorder out of my pocket

and recorded what I had seen Mears do here at Shari's, and when I had seen him doing it. As I drove by Mears's car, I noticed the license plate number of his car and recorded it. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and looked around for a parking space close to Mears's car. I found it. Then I installed my car in it and looked around to make sure that no one was going to see what I was going to do. No one did. No one was here. Then I took my gloves out of my pocket and put them on, and then I got out of my car and went over to Mears's car and put a homing device behind the license plate on the rear end of Mears's car, and then I went over to the door on the driver's side of Mears's car and picked the lock of the door, and then I got into Mears's car and searched it, and then I put a bug underneath the dashboard of Mears's car and next to the steering wheel of Mears's car. Then I got out of the front seat of Mears's car after I had searched the front seat of Mears's car and closed and locked the door. After

that, I unlocked the door to the back seat of Mears's car and got into the back seat and searched it. After that, I got out of the back seat of the car and closed and locked the door, and then I went over to the trunk of Mears's car and picked the lock of the door of the trunk, and then I opened the trunk and looked inside it. Then I closed and locked the door of the trunk and went back to *my* car and got into it, and then I started it up and drove a few yards away from Shari's and parked my car here and watched Shari's and recorded what I had found inside Mears's car: nothing. Nothing that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. I also took a chicken salad sandwich and a bottle of Coke out of the bag of groceries and ate the sandwich and sipped the Coke while I watched Shari's. I was getting hungry. I also took out from underneath the front seat of my car the radio to the bug I had put inside Mears's car and put it on the front seat of my car. Although I didn't turn it on. This wasn't

the time to turn it on. Mears wasn't in his car right now.

About an hour later, I saw Mears come out of Shari's and go into the parking lot and get into his car and leave. Quickly I turned on the radio to the bug I had planted inside Mears's car and listened in on what was going on inside Mears's car, and then I looked at my watch and took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had seen Mears do and when I had seen him doing it, and then I put my recorder back into my pocket and started up *my* car and followed Mears.

He was driving back in the same direction he had come from now. Then I heard something going on inside Mears's car. It sounded like chimes. Then I heard a man say hello. I looked at my watch.

"Hello," it was Darlene. I recognized her voice. "Van?"

"Yeah?" the man said. The man that Darlene was talking to must be Mears.

"It's Darlene,"

"Hi, honey," he said warmly. "How are ya?"

"I'm fine. You?"

"I'm fine."

"I thought maybe we could have dinner at *your* place tonight after work. I'll fix you your favorite."

"All right. I'd like that. What time do you want to come over tonight?"

"Seven o'clock?"

"All right. I'll be there."

"Great," she said softly. Then she hung up.

So did Mears. After that I got out my voice recorder and recorded the phone conversation that Mears and Darlene had just had, and when they had had it. After that, I put my recorder back into my pocket and thought.

So Mears and Darlene knew each other. But just because they knew each other didn't mean that Darlene knew about these other kind of closed circuit TV's that Mears and Colby had talked about. Maybe she did. Or

maybe she didn't. But the only way I was going to find out if Darlene knew about those other kind of closed circuit TV's, or if she didn't know about those other kind of closed circuit TV's, was to go over to Mears's place tonight and put it under surveillance and listen in on whatever Mears and Darlene talk about; and what they talk about may or may not have to do with what it was that Melissa wanted to know, too. But until I go over to Mears's place tonight and watch it and listen in on it, I was still going to have to hold off on investigating Darlene. I still didn't know if she did or didn't have to do with what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I looked at my watch. Eleven minutes to one.

I had more than enough time to do some other things in the investigation that had to do with what it was Melissa wanted to know before I go over to Mears's place tonight and watch the place and listen in on what Mears and Darlene talk about.

I followed Mears back to the Eshop and

saw him park his car inside the parking lot of the Eshop, and then I saw him to go into the Eshop. Then I looked at my watch. Then I drove by the Eshop and got out my voice recorder and recorded what I had seen Mears do at that the Eshop and when I had seen his doing it. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and continued driving down the street. It was time now for me to go do those other things in the investigation that had to do with what it was that Melissa wanted to know before I go over to Mears's place tonight and watch the place and listen in on what Mears and Darlene talk about.

CHAPTER VI

I went over to the office and wrote a summary on what I had done so far in the investigation today and printed it out and put it in the file on the Rollins termination case, and then I turned the computer and the printer off and looked at my watch. One twenty-six.

I still had time to do the other things in the investigation that had to do with what it was that Melissa wanted to know before I go over to Mears's place tonight and watch it and listen in on what Mears and Darlene talk about. I had just finished doing one of those things. Now it was time for me to do another two of those things. I put the file on the Rollins termination case into the filing cabinet and locked up the cabinet, and then I stepped out of the office and got into my car and looked inside the bag of groceries to

check the grocery situation. I needed more groceries. But I could get them after I get something to eat. I was getting hungry. So I started up the car and left the office.

El Albinil was a wonderful Mexican restaurant here on Samish Way. I had eaten there before. It was another place I liked to eat at.

I was here at El Albinil now. Sitting at a booth next to the window and eating a delicious enchilada and taco and tamale lunch with beans and rice, and washing it down with Coke, and keeping track of time.

I felt better after I had eaten. Then I left a nice tip on the table, and then I paid the check and left the restaurant, and then I went over to the store and got more groceries, and then I left the store and looked at my watch. Two thirteen.

I had time to do the last thing in the investigation that had to do with what Melissa wanted to know before I go over to Mears's place tonight and watch it and listen

in on what Mears and Darlene talk about: which was go home and rest up for tonight's work. I did.

It was dark out now. So much so that you could hardly see the stars in the sky. And the quarter moon shone through the sky like platinum.

I arrived here at Mears's place and pulled up to the curb across the street from Mears's place and a few feet away from Mears's place, and then I parked my car here, and then I looked at my watch. Six o'clock. Exactly. One hour before Darlene comes over here to Mears's place and has dinner with Mears.

I wanted to be here at Mears's place one hour before Darlene shows up and has dinner with Mears. Then I watched Mears's place and kept track of time.

At seven o'clock, a red Chevrolet appeared and pulled up to the curb in front of Mears's place and came to complete stop at the curb. Then I saw who got out of the car and collected her shiny red shoulder strap

handbag and some plastic bags: Darlene.

She was wearing a short sleeve purple turtleneck sweater and a tight fitting red skirt and flesh tone stockings and shiny red high heel shoes.

I looked at my watch. Seven o'clock. Exactly. Then I got out my voice recorder and recorded what I saw Darlene do and when she did it. Then I recorded what else I saw her do: which was go up to the front door of Mears's place and knock on it. Quickly I turned on the radio to the bug I had put inside Mears's place and the voice recorder I had plugged into the radio and put the other recorder back into my pocket. It was time now for me to listen in on what Mears and Darlene talk about. Then I saw Mears open the door.

He was wearing a long sleeve purple shirt and light brown pants and black tennis shoes.

He and Darlene hugged and kissed each other. Then he and Darlene went into the house and Mears closed the door. Then I looked all around me to make sure that no

one was going to see what I was going to do.

No one did. No one was here. Then, as quickly and silently as I could, I moved over to the other side of the seat and ducked down in the seat so no one who would be walking by or driving by would see what I was going to do, and then I took out of the glove compartment my binoculars, and then I looked through the binoculars and at Darlene's car so I could find out the license plate number of Darlene's car. I was going to need to know the license plate number of Darlene's car. I saw the license plate number of her car, and then I took my pen and notebook out of my pocket and wrote down in my notebook the license plate number of Darlene's car. Then I put the pen and notebook back into my pocket, and then I put my binoculars back into the glove compartment, and then I got on the other side of the car and continued watching Mears's place and continued listening in on Mears's place.

Then I heard Darlene say to Mears: "I'll start cooking dinner. You must be getting hungry."

"Yeah, I am," I heard Mears say.

I also heard some other sounds inside Mears's place. It sounded like some people were talking. But they didn't say anything to Mears or Darlene or both. Which meant that those voices must be coming from the TV. Mears must have been watching TV before Darlene had come over here. I don't think he had been doing anything else before Darlene had come over here. I didn't hear Mears and Darlene talking to each other, though. Which meant that Darlene must be in the kitchen right now, preparing dinner, while Mears was out in the living room watching TV.

I continued watching Mears's place and continued listening in on what Mears and Darlene talk about.

A few minutes later, I heard Darlene say to Mears: "Dinner'll be ready in a few minutes."

"Great," Mears said.

Then I heard Mears and Darlene kiss each other.

"Art called me and told me those TV's are ready," Mears then told Darlene. "We can go get them anytime."

"Great!" Darlene said.

"But Art suggested that the gang and I go over to View in groups and at different times instead of all at once and at the same time to get the TV's. That way we won't make anyone who walks by View or drives by View wonder."

"Good idea,"

"Yeah. I'm looking forward to having *my* TV's. The one I'll use at my place, and the ones we'll use out at the hideout."

"Yeah. These TV's will be very useful."

"Yeah. They'll help us out on our operations. And the gang will like using *their* TV's they'll have at *their* places as well as they'll like using the TV's out at the hideout."

"Yeah. And *I'll* like using *my* TV after it's inside *my* place as well as I'll like using the

TV's out at the hideout."

"Yeah. Everyone's going to be pleased with *these* TV's."

"Yeah--including some other people who work at View. They want some, too, and Research is making them for them, and Research is making some TV's for themselves, too."

"Hey, that's great."

"Yes, it is. But what I don't understand is this: why doesn't Art want this kind of TV?"

"Because Art is satisfied with the regular closed circuit TV he has. He doesn't want to change. He says there's no reason to. But he does like these new kind of closed circuit TV's. They'll help us out in our operations. He even said he's looking forward to seeing them in operation after we install them out at the hideout and use them in our operations."

"I see,"

Mears and Darlene didn't talk about these new kind of closed circuit TV's anymore. Instead, they talked about other things.

Although I still listened in on what they were talking about, and still recorded what they were talking about. Just in case they resume talking about these new kind of closed circuit TV's; I also thought what it was that they had talked about that had to do with these new kind of closed circuit TV's: they were going to use them in their operations as well as they were going to use them at home.

Although Colby was going to continue using the regular closed circuit TV he had at home; and he was probably going to continue using the regular kind of closed circuit TV he had at work, too. But he had said that he wanted to see these new kind of closed circuit TV's in operation after some of them were going to be installed out at their hideout, and use these kind of closed circuit TV's in their operations.

Whatever these new kind of closed circuit TV's were, they must have been designed to make matters better for Colby and Mears and Darlene and the rest of Mears's gang in their

operations, whatever their operations were, instead of worse. And I was going to have to find out what those operations were. But whatever these operations were, they must not be good, and they must not be legal, either. And I was going to have to find out what these new kind of closed circuit TV's were, too. Maybe these new kind of closed circuit TV's were the closed circuit TV's with the remote control panels. That would explain the control panels on *that* kind of closed circuit TV's. And hopefully I'll find out all of these things out before they install these new kind of closed circuit TV's. Since I didn't know what they did.

Then I thought about Mears and Darlene and Colby. It was obvious that they knew each other, and they were in on these operations that had to do with this new kind of closed circuit TV's. Whatever these operations were. I wondered where Mears and Darlene came in. And because of what I had heard Mears and Darlene talk about when

they had had dinner, I was going to have to run a check on Darlene. But it was obvious that Colby had replaced Melissa with Darlene after Colby had fired Melissa because Colby could rely on Darlene's discretion that had to do with the operations that had to do with these new closed circuit TV's. Since it looked like Darlene was in on these operations with the rest of the people who were in on these operations. Whatever these operations were.

A few hours later, I heard Darlene say to Mears: "Well, I gotta go. I work tomorrow."

"Oh, that's too bad," Mears said.

Then I heard Mears and Darlene kiss each other.

"I'll leave all of the food here," Darlene then said to Mears.

"All right. Maybe you can come over here tomorrow night and we can finish the food."

"I hope so. I'll let you know."

"I hope so, too. And I'll let *you* know if you can come over here tomorrow night so we can finish the food."

"All right."

Then I saw Darlene walk out of Mears's place and get into her car and start it up and drive away from Mears's place. I looked at my watch and took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had seen Darlene do and when I had seen her do it. But I didn't start up *my* car to follow her, though. Instead, I stayed right where I was. There wasn't going to be any need to follow and watch Darlene tonight. Since she had said that she worked tomorrow. But I was going to have to sneak inside Mears's place and render Mears unconscious and tap his cell phone. I hadn't had the chance to tap his cell phone before. And I *was* going to need to tap his cell phone. And this looked like the chance I'll have to sneak into his place and render Mears unconscious and tap his cell phone.

I continued listen in on Mears's place. It sounded like he was still watching TV. But if *he* were going to work tomorrow, then *he'd* have to go to bed pretty soon. And then I'd

have the chance to sneak into his place and render him unconscious and tap his cell phone. I waited.

Then I heard what must be the TV being turned off. Maybe Mears was going to go to bed right now. And if so, it was time now for me to make my move. I looked around me to make sure that no one was going to see what I was going to do.

No one did. No one was here. Then I put the radio to the bug I had put inside Mears's place, and the voice recorder attached to it, underneath the front seat of the car. I wanted to leave them underneath the front seat of the car while I sneak into Mears's place and render Mears unconscious and tap his cell phone so no one who would walk by my car would see the radio to the bug I had put inside Mears's place, and the voice recorder I had attached to it. Then I took my gloves out of my pocket and put them on, and then I got out of the car and closed the door, and then I ran over to the side of Mears's place and got

up against the wall and looked inside the side door to see what Mears was doing now. He was putting food into the refrigerator, and then he washed the dishes. Then I snuck into the back of Mears's place so no one would see me at the side of Mears's place--not even Mears himself. Because of this, I was going to have to continue putting Mears under surveillance from behind his place until I can get inside his place and render him unconscious and find and tap his cell phone. Then I put my ear to the door in back of Mears's place and listened. Then, I heard footsteps. And they were getting louder and louder with each passing second. I realized that these footsteps had to belong to Mears, and that he was going to his room to go to bed. Then I heard the footsteps stop. Then I heard a door being opened. And then I heard the footsteps again. Then I heard the door being closed. Then I heard a light being turned on. Then I heard some movement inside the room. Which meant that Mears

must be getting ready to go to bed. Then I heard the movement stop, and then I heard the light being turned off. Then I heard what must be Mears getting into bed. I continued listening. Then, as quickly and silently as I could, I opened the door just a crack to peek inside. Mears *was* in bed and sleeping. Then, as quickly and silently as I could, I took the knock out drops out of my pocket and tip toed into Mears's room and tip toed over to Mears, and then I put the knock out drops underneath the nostrils of Mears's nose, and then it happened: Mears passed out. And he was going to be out cold for hours. More than enough time for me to find and tap Mears's cell phone. Then I took my penlight out of my pocket and turned it on, and then I shined the light through the room, and then my eyes and my penlight searched for Mears's cell phone.

And they found it. It was on one of the end tables on either side of Mears's bed. Quickly I put the penlight in my mouth and shined the light on the cell phone, and then I

tapped the cell phone. Then I put the cell phone back on the end table and turned off my penlight and put it back into my pocket, and then I snuck out of Mears's place the same way I had entered it, and then I ran over to my car and got into it and started up the car, and then I pulled away from the curb and into the street and drove down the street, and then, two blocks later, I turned onto the cross street, and then I turned onto another cross street, and then I pulled up to the curb and parked my car here. Then I looked around to make sure that no one was going to see what I was going to do. No one did. No one was here. Then I took my gloves off and put them back into my pocket, and then I took out of my pocket the radio to the tap I had put inside Mears's cell phone and turned it on, and then I took out of my pocket my earphone and stuck one end of it into the jack of the radio to the tap I had put inside Mears's cell phone, and then I put the earpiece of the earphone in my ear, and then I put the radio to the tap I

had put inside Mears's cell phone back into my pocket and listened in on Mears's cell phone, even though Mears was out cold, and he was going to be out cold for hours, and then I took out from underneath the front seat of my car the radio to the bug I had put inside Mears's place, and the voice recorder attached to it, and then I put them on the front seat of the car and continued listening in on them as well as I was listening in on Mears's cell phone, and then I started up my car and pulled away from the curb and drove down the street so I could go home and go to bed. I was going to need to go home and go to bed. I was getting tired. Tomorrow I could resume the investigation.

CHAPTER VII

The next day, I was here at the office and listening in on Mears's cell phone and landline phone at his place. The radio to the tap I put inside Mears's cell phone, and the radio to the tap I had put inside Mears's landline phone, and the radio to the bug I had put inside Mears's place, were on my desk. But so far I didn't hear any conversations on both phones, and I didn't hear anything going on at Mears's place. And the night before after I had left Mears's place from doing what I had done there, I had continued listening in on Mears's cell phone and landline phone and place, but at those times and up to now, I hadn't heard any conversations on Mears's cell phone and landline phone, and I hadn't heard anything going on at Mears's place, either.

I was also writing my surveillance report on everything I had seen and had heard and had done at Mears's place last night.

After I finished writing the surveillance report, I turned on the printer and printed out the report and put the report into the file on the Rollins termination case. Then I turned the printer off and got back on the computer so I could find out what I can about Darlene. She had been born and raised in Los Angeles, California. Had lived in Los Angeles most of her life. Worked for an accounting firm in Los Angeles as an accountant. Then one day she moved up here to Bellingham and did various jobs here in Bellingham. Now she worked as an accountant for View. Good credit rating. Nice girl. Model citizen. Then I turned on the printer and printed out the information I had just gotten on Darlene and put the information into the file on the Rollins termination case. Then I turned the computer and the printer off and got out the phone book so I find out where Darlene lived.

I was going to need to go over to Darlene's place and search it. I was looking through the phone book to find Darlene's address when I heard something. Then I stopped looking through the book and turned the voice recorder on and listened. It was coming from Mears's landline phone. It was dialing. Then I heard a phone ring. Which meant that Mears must be calling someone.

It was the Eshop. Mears told the person who answered the phone he wasn't coming into work today. Then the person who had answered the phone said that was all right. He didn't say anything; he didn't even ask Mears why he wasn't coming to work. Which meant he knew that Mears did a lot of good work at the Eshop. Then Mears and that person hung up. After that, I heard Mears make another phone call. Then I heard the person that Mears was calling pick up the phone. "Good morning," she said. I recognized her voice. It belonged to Denise. "View Closed Circuit TV's."

"Good morning, Denise," Mears said. "Van Mears."

"Van. How are ya?"

"Fine. You?"

"Fine."

"Is Art in? I'd like to talk to him."

"Yeah, he is. I'll connect you to him," Then I heard Denise make the connection.

"Van," Colby said when he came on. "How are ya?"

"Fine," Mears said. "You?"

"Fine."

"I want to let you know that I'll come over sometime today and get *my* TV's."

"Fine. They'll be here."

"Great. And I promise you that after I install them? I'll let you know that I've installed them, and then you can come and see them in operation."

"Great. I'm looking forward to seeing them in operation as well as I'm looking forward to using them in *our* operations."

"I know. You did say you want to see them

in operation and use them in our operations."

"That's right, I did. Well, if there isn't anything else, I gotta get back to work."

"No, there isn't. See ya later, Art,"

"See ya later, Van,"

Then Colby and Mears hung up. Then I played back the voice recorder and listened to what Colby and Mears had just talked about on the phone. Then I turned the recorder off and thought.

So Mears said he was going to go over and get *his* TV's. No doubt he meant that he was going to go over to View and get his TV's. And he also said that he was going to go over to View and get *his* TV's sometime today. Which meant that he wasn't going to go over to View and get *his* TV's right away. And he had called up the Eshop and let them know that he wasn't going to work today before he had called Colby at work and had told him that he was going to go over to View and get *his* TV's today. Well, then if Mears were going to go over to View and get *his* TV's sometime today,

then that would give me enough time to go over to View and watch for Mears and follow him wherever he goes and watch whatever he does after he goes over to View and gets his TV's and leaves View. So I put the phone back and put the file on the Rollins termination case into the filing cabinet and locked up the cabinet, and then I collected the radio to the tap I had put inside Mears's cell phone, and the radio to the tap I had put inside Mears's landline phone, and the bug I had put inside Mears's place, and put them into my briefcase, and then I closed up the briefcase and collected the briefcase and left the office. Because of my wanting to go over to View and watch for Mears and follow him wherever he goes and watch whatever he does after he goes over to View and gets his TV's and leaves View, I was going to have to find out where Darlene lived and go over to her place and search it when I can.

I was here at View now. Parked across the street from View, and a few yards away from

View, and watching View through my binoculars and sitting on the other side of the front seat of my car and ducked down in the front seat of the car so no one walking by me or driving by me would see what I was doing; I also thought.

So Denise knew Mears. I had heard them ask each other how they were when I had heard Mears call View and tell Denise he'd like to talk to Colby. Because of this, I was going to have to run a check on Denise.

And I was going to have to run a check on the Eshop, too. So I could find out if the people who worked at the Eshop worked with Mears and his gang and Colby and the other people who worked at View. When Mears had called up the Eshop and had told the person who had answered the phone that he wasn't going to be in today, the person who had answered the phone had said that that was all right. He hadn't asked Mears why Mears wasn't going to be in today. But this didn't tell me if the people who worked at the Eshop

worked with Mears and his gang and Colby and the other people who worked at View, or if they didn't work with Mears and his gang and Colby and the other people who worked at View.

Then, I saw a small black truck appear. Then I saw who was driving the truck: Mears. Then I saw Mears turn into View and drive through the plant. I looked at my watch. Then I got out my voice recorder and recorded Mears's appearing in the truck and going into View, and when I had seen his doing it. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and continued watching for Mears through my binoculars and still ducked down in the front seat of my car. So Mears was going to put the number of these new kind of closed circuit TV's in the truck instead of in his car. Well, that made sense: his car wasn't big enough to put *that* many of these new kind of closed circuit TV's in. But the truck was.

Twenty minutes later, I saw Mears drive out of View and turn onto the street and drive

down the street. I looked at my watch. Then, quickly, I put my binoculars into the glove compartment and got over to the other side of the car and started it up, and then I pulled away from the curb and drove down the street and followed Mears. Then I got out my voice recorder and recorded my seeing Mears's leaving View and when I had seen his leaving View. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and watched what Mears was doing as well as I was following him.

I followed him out to an airport and saw him go into the airport. I looked at my watch. But I didn't go into the airport when *he* went into the airport. If I would, he'd see me doing it. So I pulled over to the curb and parked my car here and got out my voice recorder and recorded my seeing Mears go into the airport and when I had seen him go into the airport. Then I got my binoculars out of the glove compartment and looked through them and at what I could see Mears do inside the airport.

The airport was very small, and it looked like no one else was in it. I didn't see anyone else in it; I didn't even see Mears inside it. Which meant that he must be somewhere inside the airport where I can't see what was he was doing. Like being inside a room. Or, standing behind something. Then I opened up my briefcase and turned on the radios I had put inside it and listened to what was going on at Mears's place, and listened in on his cell phone and landline phone; I also took out of the glove compartment my pocket size electronic ear and turned it on and listened to what was going on at the airport since I couldn't go into the airport and see what Mears was doing inside the airport. Then, I heard something going on inside the airport. I looked at my watch and recorded what I heard and when I heard it. Then I continued listening and turned my voice recorder off. I didn't want to record any sound I heard inside the airport until or unless I would be sure what that sound was.

But all I heard inside the airport were a vehicle driving through the airport, and then it stopped, and then I heard a door being opened and shut, and then I heard footsteps. My guess was that these sounds belonged to what Mears must be doing right now: driving into the airport and parking his truck somewhere inside the airport. I didn't hear anything else going on inside the airport. Which meant that no one else must be at the airport. Just Mears was at the airport. Then I heard some more activity inside the airport, but I couldn't make out what the activity was. But my guess was that the activity was Mears's taking these new kind of closed circuit TV's out of the truck and taking them into a room or rooms at the airport and installing the TV's.

A few hours later, I heard Mears make a phone call on his cell phone. I looked at my watch and recorded what I heard and when I heard it. Then I turned on the voice recorder connected to the radio to the tap I had put

inside Mears's cell phone and listened.

I heard dialing. Which meant that Mears must be calling someone. Then, I heard a phone ringing.

"Good afternoon," Denise said. "View Closed Circuit TV's."

"Hello," Mears said. "Denise? Van Mears."

"Van. How are ya?"

"Fine. You?"

"Fine."

"Great. Is Art there? I'd like to talk to him."

"Yeah, he's here. I'll connect you to him,"
Then she made the connection.

"Van," Colby said when he came on. "How are ya?"

"Fine. You?"

"Fine."

"Great. I just finished installing those TV's."

"Great,"

"You said you'd like to see them in operation after I installed them?"

"Yes, I did."

"Well, you can see them anytime."

"Great. I'd like to go out there after work today and take a look at them."

"All right. I'll meet you here after work, and then we'll take a look at them."

"Great. Thanks for calling, Van."

"No problem, Art,"

Then Colby and Mears hung up, and then I turned off the voice recorder connected to the radio to the tap I had put inside Mears's cell phone since Mears wasn't making or taking any more phone calls on his cell phone right now. Then I looked at my watch. Twelve fifty seven.

I had more than enough time to find out what Mears had done inside the airport after he leaves the airport. *And* had more than enough to come back here to the airport and listen in on and watch what Mears and Colby were going to do at the airport from outside the airport after Mears and Colby come back to the airport after Colby gets off work. Then

I continued watching the airport to see when Mears was going to leave the airport.

Then I saw him leave the airport. Quickly I looked at my watch and recorded my seeing his leaving the airport and when I saw his leaving the airport and put my recorder back into my pocket and ducked down in the seat of my car to make sure that Mears wouldn't see me. He didn't see me when I saw him drive passed me. All I saw was his looking forward when I saw his driving by me. Then I sat up in the seat of my car and looked behind me. Then I saw Mears driving further and further down the street, getting smaller and smaller with each passing second. Then I saw Mears disappear. Now Mears was no longer in my sight. Then, I started up my car and pulled away from the curb and drove over to the airport so I could go into the airport and see what Mears had done inside the airport.

CHAPTER VIII

I drove into the airport and looked all around me. The airport looked just as small on the inside as it did on the outside. It also looked deserted. Like it hadn't been used in a long time. I also saw a couple of hangars with regular doors and overhead roll-up doors inside the airport. But there weren't very many of them. Since this *was* a small airport. Then I stopped my car in the center of the airport and parked it here. It was time now for me to get out of the car and see what was behind these doors and overhead doors. Mears must have done what he had come out here to the airport to do inside one of these rooms that one of these doors lead to.

When I came to one of these doors, I turned the knob of the door to see if the door were locked it. It was. Then I took my gloves

out of my pocket and put them on, and then I took my lock pick set out of my pocket and picked the lock of this door and opened it and went in and closed the door and put my lock pick set back into my pocket and looked all around the room I was in now.

Nothing inside *this* room. It was completely empty. But I did see entrances to other rooms on either side of *this* room and in the corner of this room. I went through one of these entrances. Then, I stopped suddenly and looked.

On the other side of *this* room was a door leading to another room.

Inside *this* room, and on one side of the room, were a long table and chairs surrounding the table. And against the wall were some cabinets and benches. And on the other side of the room, and on long tables against the wall, were the closed circuit TV's with the control panels. I went over to them. They were marked. One of them said EAST SIDE on it. The other one said WEST SIDE on

it. The other one said NORTH SIDE on it. And the last one said SOUTH SIDE on it. Then I looked at the control panels on the TV's. All of them had two sets of keyboards on them. Written on one side of the control panel was the word TELESCOPIC MODE. Below the words TELESCOPIC MODE was the word ENTER. And below the word ENTER were the words NUMBER OF FEET. And on the other side of the control panel was the word SUPERAUDIO MODE. And below the words SUPERAUDIO MODE was the word ENTER. And below the word ENTER were the words NUMBER OF FEET. I looked for the switch or button to turn on the TV, and also looked for the switch or button that turned off the TV, and found them, and then, out of curiosity, I turned on the TV, and then I saw the screen of the TV faded from black into picture, and then I pressed the numbers 215 on the TELESCOPIC MODE side of the TV, and then I pressed ENTER, and then I looked at the TV screen. Then, I saw a freeway. Two

hundred and fifteen feet away from here; I also saw on the shoulder of the freeway a couple of people who were talking and standing next to a car that was on the shoulder of the freeway. Then, out of curiosity, I pressed the same numbers on the SUPERAUDIO MODE part of the control panel, and then I looked at the TV again. And then I heard what was going on on the freeway two hundred and fifteen feet away from here; cars and trucks driving by, *and*, the two people were standing next to the car that was on the freeway and talking. They were talking about what they were going to do tonight. One of those people was a man, and the other person was a woman; one of them also told the other that she was hoping that the person from the gas station was going to get there as soon as possible so he can tow the car back to the gas station. Which meant they had run out of gas, or they had a flat, or something else had happened to the car. Then I turned off the TV and got out my voice

recorder and recorded what I had just discovered here inside this room. Then I put my recorder back into my pocket and put a bug underneath the table the TV's were on, and then I went over to the cabinets and the benches to look inside them. Nothing inside the cabinets and the benches. Maybe there had been something inside the cabinets and the benches once before, or maybe there was going to be something inside the cabinets and the benches later. Then I went over to the door that led into the other room.

When I got to it, I turned the knob of the door to see if the door were locked. It was. Then I got out my lock pick set and picked the lock of the door, and then I opened the door and went into the next room and closed the door and put my lock pick set back into my pocket and looked all around the room I was in now.

This room had trucks in it. And an overhead door. There wasn't anything else inside *this* room. I walked over to the trucks

to inspect them. I saw inside two of them more closed circuit TV's with the control panels on tables bolted to one of the walls of the trucks, and chairs tied down to the tables. They, too, had the same kind of keyboards on them that the other closed circuit TV's with the control panels had. The rest of the trucks had nothing inside them. I got out my voice recorder and recorded what I had just seen inside this room. Then I put my voice recorder back into my pocket and put a bug underneath the tables inside the trucks that the closed circuit TV's with the control panels were on, and then I got out of the trucks and tried to pull up on the overhead door so I could walk out of it and leave this room and continue looking around the airport, but the door wouldn't open. Which meant that the door must be locked from the outside. So I left this room the same way I had entered it, and closed and locked the door to the entrance to the room I had been in, and then I walked out of the other room and closed and

locked the door. Then I looked at the overhead door to see if it had been locked from the outside. It had been. Then I walked further through the airport to continue taking a look around the airport. Then I came to another hangar with regular door and overhead door. I walked over to the regular door so I could walk through it and see what was inside the room.

When I got to the door, I turned the knob of the door to see if the door were locked or not. It was locked. Then I took my lock pick set out of my pocket and picked the lock of the knob of the door, and then I went into the room and closed and locked the door behind me. Then I put my lock pick set back into my pocket and looked all around the room. Then, I stopped suddenly and looked.

Inside *this* room, and against the walls, and on tables against the walls, were various items; regular TV's, turn tables, radios, DVD players, VCR's, voice recorders, CD players, Blue Ray players, guns, ammo, knives,

furniture, leather goods.

On the other side of this room and in the corner of the room was a door that led into another room.

I took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what I had just seen inside *this* room. Then I put my voice recorder back into my pocket and went over to the door on the other side of the room so I could go through it and see what was inside the other room.

When I got to the door, I turned the knob of the door to see if the door were locked or not. It was locked. Then I took my lock pick set out of my pocket and picked the lock of the knob of the door, and then I opened the door and went into the room and closed and locked the door and put my lock pick set back into my pocket and looked all around me. Then, I stopped suddenly and looked.

Inside *this* room was the same stuff I had seen inside the other room: various items; I also saw the overhead door. I took my voice recorder out of my pocket and recorded what

I had just seen inside *this* room. Then I put my voice recorder back into my pocket and tried to open the overhead door so I could get out of *this* room and continue looking around the airport, but the door wouldn't open. Which meant that the door must be locked from the outside. I left *this* room the same way I had entered it, and locked the door to the entrance to the room I had been in, and then I walked out of the other room and closed and locked the door. Then I looked at the overhead door to see if it had been locked from the outside. It had been. Then I walked further through the airport to continue looking around the airport. But I didn't find anything else here that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know; there wasn't even anything inside the operations tower that could tell me what Melissa wanted to know.

When I got to the part of the airport the conference room and the TV's with the control panels were in, I looked up at the wall

of the building. Then I took a gun out of my pocket that shot bugs, and then I put a bug into it, and then I moved away from the wall and aimed the gun at a good place of the wall where the bug won't be noticed, and then I shot the bug into that part of the wall. Then I put my gun back into my pocket, and then, out of curiosity, I walked outside the airport and looked all around it to see if lenses of the closed circuit TV's with the control panels were installed outside the airport. They were. But not in plain sight. Instead, they were hidden carefully all around the airport. Which meant that Mears didn't want them to stick out like sore thumbs. There were four of them. One of them was on the south side of the airport, and another one was on the north side of the airport, and the other one was on the east side of the airport, and the last one was on the west side of the airport. Then I looked at my watch. Two thirty-three.

I was going to have just enough time to check the grocery supply and get more

groceries if I have to and go back to the office and eat there before Colby and Mears come out here to the airport and Colby sees the closed circuit TV's with the control panels in operation and I monitor what they say and do from my office. I was getting hungry. I wasn't going to be able to watch and listen to what they say and do from outside the airport. They might see me do it when Colby sees the closed circuit TV's with the remote control panels in operation. And since I had just enough time to check the grocery situation and get more groceries if I have to and go back to the office and eat there and monitor what Colby and Mears were going to do out here at the airport from my office, I wasn't going to be able to do the other things in the investigation today. Because of this, I was going to have to do the other things in the investigation when I can. So I ran back into the airport and got back into my car and checked the grocery situation. I could use some more groceries. So I started up the car

and drove out of the airport and over to the nearest grocery store and bought some more groceries and went back to the office.

I was here at the office now. Sitting behind my desk and eating a couple of tuna fish sandwiches and washing them down with Coke and watching TV and keeping track of time while I waited to hear Colby and Mears show up at the airport and then Colby sees the closed circuit TV's with the control panels in operation.

I felt better after I had eaten. Now I was having more Coke and continued watching TV and continued keeping track of time while I continued waiting for Colby and Mears to show up at the airport and I monitor what they're going to do at the airport; I also thought.

I had seen closed circuit TV's that were programmed to see and hear things from miles around. Well, that made sense: the people who had made them could see and hear things from miles around while they

were conducting their operations, whatever their operations were, and be prepared for whatever they see and hear. A good way to keep the authorities from keeping them from carrying out their operations. And it looked like View had been responsible for making such a closed circuit TV for such a purpose. And it looked like Melissa had almost found out about this kind of closed circuit TV's and what they were going to be used for. And it looked like everyone else who worked at View knew about these kind of closed circuit TV's and wanted some for themselves. And Mears and his gang wanted these kind of closed circuit TV's for themselves as well as they and Colby and the other people who worked at View wanted to use these kind of closed circuit TV's in their operations, too. Whatever their operations were.

And I had seen four of these TV's and a table and chairs and cabinets and benches inside one of the rooms at the airport. Which meant that that room had to be where they

were conducting their operations in, and monitoring all four sides of the airport, too. And the cabinets may have contained some things that had to do with their operations. Like papers or photographs or maps or blueprints. Things that they must have used in their planning their operations. And then they destroyed these things after they had planned and pulled off their operations so they wouldn't be discovered. Or maybe these things will be inside the cabinets and the benches before and during their planning their operations.

And then I had seen inside the other room at the airport trucks. And inside two of those trucks were closed circuit TV's with the control panels. Well, that made sense: some of the people who were carrying out their operations would be monitoring what was going on while the other people were carrying out the operations and be prepared for whatever it was they'd see and hear. And the other trucks that didn't have the closed

circuit TV's inside them would be used to conduct the operations from. Like putting things into or taking things out of the trucks or both.

And then I had seen the various items in the other two rooms at the airport. I was going to have to find out what *they* were. Unless perhaps Colby and Mears tell me what they were when they go out to the airport tonight and then Colby sees the closed circuit TV's in operation. They would or might say what *they* were when Colby sees the closed circuit TV's in operation.

At five o'clock, I heard Colby make a phone call from his office phone. Quickly I turned off the TV with the remote control and turned on the voice recorder and listened. I heard a phone ring. Then I heard the phone being picked up. Then I heard the person say hello. It was Mears.

"Van?" Colby said. "It's Art."

"Art. How are ya?"

"Fine. You?"

"Fine.

"I'm off now, so I'll be out there in a few minutes to see the TV's in operation."

"I'll be there,"

"Great," Then Colby hung up.

So did Mears.

And I turned the voice recorder off and started listening in on the airport.

CHAPTER IX

A few minutes later, Colby pulled into the airport. I turned the voice recorder on and continued listening in on the airport. Colby saw Mears. Mears was leaning against his car, which he had parked here in the center of the airport, and he was smiling and his arms were folded, and he was wearing a black leather coat and a light blue shirt and blue jeans and black tennis shoes.

Colby parked *his* car right alongside Mears's car, and then he got out his car and closed the door.

He was wearing a light brown three piece suit and a light yellow shirt and a red and black stripe tie, and black leather shoes.

"Hi, Van, " he said to Mears.

"Hi, Art," Mears said to Colby.

"Ready to go see the TV's in operation?"

"I sure am," Colby said. "Let's go."

"All right."

Then Colby and Mears walked over to the part of the airport their conference room and the closed circuit TV's with the control panels were in, and then Mears unlocked the door, and then he and Colby went into the room, and then Mears closed the door. Then Colby saw the TV's and walked over to them to take a better look at them.

"I see you have each one of them monitoring all four sides of the airport," Colby said to Mears.

"That's right," Mears admitted. "I have. And I've hidden all of the lenses to the TV's in each direction of the airport so they won't stick out like sore thumbs. That'll be important."

"Of course."

"Now I'll show you how the TV's work. We'll use the TV that monitors the west end of the airport." Then Mears turned on the TV that monitored the west of the airport, and

then he and Colby were looking at the scenery on the west of the airport. "Now I'll program the TV to monitor the picture and sound of the scenery three hundred feet away." Then Mears pressed the number three button once, and the zero button twice, that were underneath the words TELESCOPIC MODE, and then he pressed ENTER, and he pressed the same three buttons underneath the words SUPERAUDIO MODE, and then he pressed ENTER, and then Mears and Colby watched the TV screen. Then they saw and heard the scenery that was three hundred feet away from the airport. They were looking at a small shopping center now. They saw and heard cars driving into and out of the parking of this shopping center and also heard people talking.

"That's amazing!" Colby said, smiling.

"Yeah, it is," Mears said. He smiled, too.

"Yeah!" Colby repeated, still looking and sounding amazed.

"Yeah!" Then Mears turned the TV off.

"Yeah!" Colby repeated. "I think this'll work!"

"I think so, too," Mears said. "And I'm glad I installed the TV's here in the conference room so we can monitor what's going on outside the airport from miles around if we have to while we discuss our operations, and I'm glad I installed the rest of the TV's inside two of our trucks, too. Let me show you."

Then Mears and Colby walked over to the door in the corner of the room, and on the other side of the room, and then Mears unlocked the door, and then he and Colby went into the room the trucks were in, and then Mears closed the door. After that, he and Colby went over to one of the trucks and got into it. Then they looked at the TV's on the table bolted to the wall of the truck.

"So you have four TV's here in the truck, too," Colby said.

"That's right," Mears said. "Each one of them monitor all four directions; north south, east, west."

"Hey," Colby said, smiling. "Well, now we'll to be able to see and hear what goes on at the places we conduct our operations at and be prepared for whatever we see and hear from miles around."

"That's right."

"Well, I'm glad that Research came up with this idea of programmable closed circuit TV's. And I'm glad I let Research work on this idea. I think they'll be pleased to know the idea works. I will tell them about what I saw out here."

"Do. And think they'll be pleased, too. And *I'm* pleased about *my* programmable closed circuit TV I installed in *my* place after I installed the TV's in the conference room and here in two of the trucks and tested it. It works."

"What about the rest of *your* gang? Have *they* installed *their* programmable closed circuit TV's in *their* place?"

"Yes, they have. They called me up and told me they installed *their* programmable

closed circuit TV's and tested them. They work."

"Well, that's great."

"What about your people. Have *they* installed *their* programmable closed circuit TV's at home and tested them?"

"I don't know. I've been busy doing other things."

"I see,"

"But I'm sure they'll tell me they have installed their programmable closed circuit TV's and tested them."

"Yeah," Then Colby smiled again and spoke again. "Well, that's great. Our using these TV's on our operations."

Mears smiled, too. "Yeah," *he* said. "Although we don't have any new operations to pull off right now."

"No. We don't," Colby admitted. "But when we do, I'll be looking forward to using these kind of TV's on our next operation and future operations."

"So will the gang and I."

"So will *my* people."

"Yeah. Well. I'd better get going. I haven't had dinner yet."

"Neither have I,"

Then Mears and Colby talked about where they could have dinner and came to a decision they could have dinner, and then they left the room the trucks were in the same way they had entered it, and then Mears locked the door to the entrance to the room the trucks were in, and then he and Colby left the conference room the same way they had entered it, and then Mears closed and locked the door, and then he got into *his* car and started it up and left the airport, and then Colby got into *his* car and started it up and left the airport, and then both men drove over to the restaurant that the both of them were going to have dinner at. And I played back the recording and listened to the conversation that Colby and Mears had just had about the closed circuit TV's with the control panels that I had recorded. After I finished listening

to the conversation, I turned the recorder off and thought.

So what I had just heard Colby and Mears talk about having to do with the closed circuit TV's with the control panels confirmed what I had suspected: they and their people *were* going to use these programmable closed circuit TV's to monitor the airport and the places they were going to conduct their operations at. But I still didn't know what these operations were. They hadn't said what these operations were. And they hadn't said what kind of operations they had conducted before, either. They had only said that they were going to use these programmable closed circuit TV's on their next operation and future operations. And because of this, I was still going to have to find out what these operations were. And I knew that I had the time to do the other things in the investigation now, too. And I knew that I had the time to write the report on the conversation that Colby and Mears had had at

the airport that had to do with the closed circuit TV's with the control panels, also. Then I looked at my watch. Five thirty-eight.

I decided to do all of these things tomorrow. I knew I could do this. I didn't want to start doing these things right now. I'd stay all night at the office if I would. Not only that, I was getting hungry, and I could use some sleep, too. So I collected the briefcase the radios were in and left the office.

Boston Pizza was in Bellis Fair. It was a nice restaurant. I had eaten there before. It was another place that I liked to eat at.

I was here at Boston Pizza now. Sitting at a booth and eating a hamburger and washing it down with beer. For dessert I had chocolate ice cream. And washed *that* down with *more* beer.

I felt better after I had eaten. Then I left a nice tip on the table and paid the check and left the restaurant and went home and watched TV until eleven o'clock, and then I went to bed.

I was up early the next day and in the den and looking up in the phone book Denise's address and Darlene's address. I was going to go over to their places and search them. I found their addresses and wrote them down on the pad on my desk, and then I tore the paper I had written their addresses on off of the pad and folded it, and then I left the den and went into *my* room and got dressed and left my place.

I was driving around and looking for a pay phone now. What I needed to do before I go over to Denise's place and search it was call Denise to find out if Denise were at home. And I wanted to do that from a pay phone so that the call won't be traced to my cell phone or landline phone or office phone. And I was going to use my pocket size voice changer to disguise my voice, too.

I found a pay phone and called View to find out if Denise were working today. If she wouldn't be there at work today, then I'd call her place.

"Good morning," Denise answered the phone. "View Closed Circuit TV's."

I spoke into my voice changer: "Oh, I'm sorry. I must have the wrong number."

"Quite all right," Denise said pleasantly. Then she hung up.

So did I. Then I put my voice changer back into my pocket and got back into my car and started it up and drove over to Denise's place.

Denise's place was on State Street. It was an apartment.

I was driving away from Denise's place now. I had searched it and bugged it and tapped the landline phone there. Now I was recording what I had discovered there that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know: nothing. Then I put my voice recorder back into my pocket and drove over to Darlene's place so I could search that.

Darlene's place was on Harris Avenue.

I was driving away from her place now. I had searched it and bugged it and had tapped the landline phone there. Now I was

recording what I had found at Darlene's place: nothing. Then I put my voice recorder back into my pocket and drove over to the office and wrote my report on what it was I had discovered at Denise's place and Darlene's place that could tell me what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I turned on the printer and printed out the report and put the report into the file on the Rollins termination case, and then I turned the printer off and got back on the computer to find out what I can about Denise. She had been born and raised in Seattle, Washington, and she had lived in Seattle for a long time, and then she had moved here to Bellingham, and she had lived here in Bellingham for a long time. She was still living here in Bellingham. She had attended a temporary service agency and had worked at a lot of different places here in Bellingham, and then she had gone to work at View. And after she had finished doing her temporary work at View, she had decided to continue working at View. She liked working

at View. And so, she had continued working at View, and she was still working at View. Good credit rating. Nice person. Then I turned the printer on and printed out the information I had gotten on Denise, and then I put the information into the file on Rollins termination case.

Then I turned the printer off and wrote my report on the conversation that Colby and Mears had had out at the airport that had to do with the closed circuit TV's with the control panels, and then I turned the printer on and printed out the report and put the report in the file on the Rollins termination case.

Then I turned the printer off and got back on the computer to find out what I can about the Eshop. There wasn't anything wrong about the Eshop. It *was* a good place to work at. Business at that place was doing quite well. I also got information on the people who worked at the Eshop. But *this* information didn't tell me if the people who worked at the

shop were or if they weren't members of Mears's gang. Maybe they *were* members of Mears's gang. Or, maybe they weren't members of Mears's gang. And the information didn't even tell me if these people had any association with Colby and *his* people. Maybe they did. Or, maybe they didn't.

After I had found out what I needed to know about the Eshop, I turned on the printer and then printed out the information on the Eshop, and then I put the information into the file on the Rollins termination case, and then I turned the printer off and got back on the computer so I could find out what I can about the airport. It was obvious that that airport *was* abandoned and Mears and Colby and their people had found out about it and decided to use the airport to plan their operations in.

The airport *was* abandoned. It had been abandoned for a long time. Before that, a private charter service had conducted its

operations inside the airport. But after a while, the charter service had gone out of business because of lack of business. Then the airport had been shut down. And it was still shut down. No one was using it. No reason for that, though. Then I turned on the printer and printed out the information on the airport, and then I put the information into the file on the Rollins termination case, and then I turned the computer and the printer off. Then I thought about those various items inside the airport. They were just sitting there inside the airport, unused, and locked up inside the airport. Then, it came to me: *those items must have been stolen*. That would explain their sitting there inside the airport and being locked up inside the airport and not being used. And Mears and Colby and their people must have stolen these items and hid them inside the airport. And before that, they must have planned the theft of all of these items. That would explain the conference room at the airport. And the theft

of these items must have been the operations that Colby and Mears and their people had conducted, and they were going to plan and conduct more theft operations, too. That had to be it! But in order to find out if all of these items had been stolen, I was going to have to have the police help me do that. Maybe *they* knew about the theft of all of these items. I got on the phone and called the police department and asked for the robbery division and asked to talk to Alex Bailey, a sergeant in Robbery.

"Bailey," he said when he came on.

"Hello. Alex?" I said. "Frank Hurley."

"Frank. How are ya?"

"Fine. You?"

"Fine. How's the PI business?"

"As always. How's the Robbery business?"

"As always. I'd like to talk to you about something, but I don't want to do it on the phone. It could get lengthy."

"All right. You can come here over and talk to me about it."

"Great. I'm on my way," Then I hung up.
So did Alex.

"Well, that's a very interesting story," Alex said after I had finished telling him what I had found out so far in my investigation of what it was that Melissa wanted to know.

I was here inside the robbery division of the police department now. Sitting in front of Alex's desk while Alex was sitting behind his desk.

"Yes, it is," I said.

"Well, I'm going to find out if these items *had* been stolen. I think they have been. They sound familiar." Then Alex got on his computer. Then he stopped and looked at his computer intensely. Then he spoke to me again: "Yeah, they have been stolen."

"Well, that only confirms what I suspected: those items *were* stolen. And Colby and Mears and their people stole these items and hid them inside the airport."

"Yeah. And now they're going to use these closed circuit TV's that you can program to

see and hear things from miles around while they pull off their next theft operations and use the other closed circuit TV's you program to see and hear things from miles around at *their* places, too."

"That's right."

"And we'll have to stop them from using these kind of closed circuit TV's and stop them from carrying out their next theft operations."

"I know,"

"You'd better call your client and tell her what we're going to do. After that, you and I can work out our plan of action."

"All right," Then I got out my cell phone and called Melissa and told her what I had discovered at the airport and about what Alex and I had just talked about.

CHAPTER X

A few days later, Alex and I were here at Melissa's place. Alex and his men and I had worked out our plan of action, and then I had gone back to work at View and smuggled into Colby's office and smuggled out of his office and out of View the ledger that contained the sloppy bookkeeping work that Colby had said that Melissa had done. Then I had called Melissa and had told her that Alex and his men and I had worked out our plan of action and that Alex and I would like to meet her and tell her what our plan of action was. Then we had made an appointment for Alex and me to tell her what our plan of action was. Now Alex knocked on the front door of Melissa's place. He was medium height, had black hair, blue-green eyes, wolf like features, a solid build, and he was wearing a gray tweed jacket and a white shirt and a black tie and

black pants and black leather shoes.

The door opened, and standing inside the house was Melissa.

She was wearing a white dress and flesh tone stockings and shiny white high heel shoes.

I introduced her and Alex to each other, and they shook hands, and Alex showed Melissa his badge.

Then Melissa stepped aside and asked Alex and me if we'd like to come in, and we came in, and then Melissa asked Alex and me if we'd like to have some coffee and we accepted.

Alex and I were in the living room and sitting on the couch now. Then Melissa came into the living room and walked over to the couch holding a tray that had three cups of coffee on it, and then she put the cups of coffee on the coffee table, and then she sat down next to us, and then we sipped our coffee.

"I have something you might like to see," I

told Melissa and took it out of my briefcase and gave it to her. "It's the ledger that contains the sloppy bookkeeping work that Art says you did."

Melissa looked through the ledger. Then she laughed and shook her head after she had finished looking at the ledger. "So this is the sloppy bookkeeping work that Art said I did," Melissa said after she had finished looking at the ledger.

"Yeah," I said. "As you can see, the book looks really horrible."

"Yeah," Alex agreed. He had seen the ledger, too. "A real nightmare."

Melissa laughed. "I gotta have this."

"You can if we complete our assignment successfully," Alex said. "Right now we've got to hold onto it for evidence."

"I understand,"

"And I've still got Art's office bugged and his office phone tapped," I said. "And we're still listening in on his office and office phone, but so far it looks like he doesn't know that

the book is gone. And as long as he doesn't know that the book is gone, it won't upset what we're doing now."

"Yeah," Alex agreed. "Right now we've got View under surveillance as well as we've got Art and his office and office phone under surveillance, and we've got also got the rest of the people who are in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations under surveillance, the ones that we know about that, this is. As for the ones we don't know about, we'll carry out a plan we've come up with to stop them from carrying out *their* closed circuit TV and theft operations if we can't find them and identify them and arrest them. We've also got under surveillance the Eshop, the place that Mears works at, and Mears himself, and the other people who work at the Eshop, but so far it looks like those people who work at the Eshop have nothing to do with what Mears and his people and Art and *his* people are doing. We haven't seen or hear their going over to View and getting *their* closed circuit

TV's you program to see and hear things from miles around. Which means that they must not be in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations. But we've still got them under surveillance, just in case. And they'll remain under surveillance until or unless we complete our operation successfully. We've also got under surveillance the place they're hiding the stuff they stole in and have their closed circuit TV's there."

"And all of these places that Sergeant Bailey has just talked about are going to remain under surveillance until we carry out our plan of action," I told Melissa.

"That's right," Alex confirmed. Then Alex and I told Melissa what our plan of action was and how we were going to carry it out.

The next day, some of Alex's men were driving back and forth by the airport and talking about other things and not about the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and not about *our* operation to shut down the closed circuit TV and theft operations, so that

the people who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations who would be at the airport wouldn't hear Alex's men were talking about the closed circuit TV and theft operations and *our* operation to close down the closed circuit TV and theft operations until finally they noticed that Mears and Colby and their people hadn't gone to and from the airport, and then they moved in on the airport and disconnected the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around and confiscated them and the stolen items and sealed off the area and investigated it more. But they didn't find anything else here.

More of Alex's men put Darlene's place under surveillance by driving back and forth by Darlene's place and talked about other things and not about the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and not about *our* operation to close down the closed circuit TV and theft operations so Darlene couldn't hear them talking about the closed circuit TV and

theft operations and *our* operation to shut down the closed circuit TV and theft operations until finally they saw Darlene walk out of her place.

She was wearing a long sleeve red turtleneck sweater and a tight fitting burgundy skirt and flesh tone stockings and shiny burgundy high heel shoes, and her right hand was grasping the strap of her purse which was resting on her right shoulder.

She got into her car and left her place, and then some of Alex's men went into Darlene's place and found Darlene's closed circuit TV that was programmed to see and hear things from miles around and disconnected it and took it with them and left Darlene's place and joined the other the men and left with them and took Darlene's closed circuit TV that you program to see and hear things from miles around with them to police headquarters. They had just confiscated Darlene's closed circuit TV that you program to see and hear things from miles around.

The rest of Alex's men followed Darlene so they could arrest Darlene.

They were following Darlene in a residential area now, and then two of Alex's men pulled up to Darlene and drove around her and cut her off by pulling up to the curb and stopping here. Then Darlene stopped when she them do this, and then the two men got out of their car and walked over to them, and Darlene got out of *her* car, and one of the two men took a warrant out of his pocket and spoke to Darlene: "Darlene Kerr?"

"Yes?" Darlene said. "I'm Darlene Kerr."

Then the other man took his badge out of his pocket and showed it to Darlene and introduced himself and the other man to her and told her she was under arrest and why she was under arrest. Then, Darlene looked shocked.

More of Alex's men were putting Mears's place under surveillance by driving back and forth by Mears's place and talked about other things and not about the closed circuit TV

and theft operations, and not about *our* operation to put out of business the closed circuit TV and theft operations so that Mears couldn't hear them talking about the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and about *our* operation to close down the closed circuit TV and theft operations until finally they saw Mears walk out of his place.

He was wearing his shiny black leather jacket and a light green shirt and blue jeans and black tennis shoes.

Then he got into his car and started it up, and then he pulled away from the curb and left his place, and then some of Alex's men entered Mears's place and found the closed circuit TV that was programmed to see and hear things from miles around that Mears had and disconnected it and took it with them and left Mears's place and joined the other men, and they took Mears's closed circuit TV that you program to see and hear things from miles around to police headquarters. They had just confiscated the TV.

The rest of Alex's men followed Mears so they could arrest Mears.

When they saw Mears pull into the parking of the Eshop, *they* pulled into the parking lot and saw Mears park his car, and then *they* drove up to Mears and one of the men parked *his* car next to Mears's car, and then both of the men got out of the car.

"Van Mears?" one of the men said to Mears.

"Yes," Mears said. "I'm Van Mears."

Then one of the men took his badge out of his pocket and showed it to Mears and introduced himself and the other man to Mears, and the other man took a warrant out of his pocket and showed it to Mears and spoke to Mears: "We have a warrant for your arrest."

"On what charge?" Mears said.

Then the man told him.

Then Mears looked shocked.

More of Alex's men were putting Denise under surveillance by driving back and forth

by Denise's place and talking about other things and not about the closed circuit TV and theft operations and not about *our* operation to put out of business the closed circuit TV and theft operations so that Darlene couldn't hear them talking about the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and about *our* operation to put out of business the closed circuit TV and theft operations until finally they saw Denise walk out of her place.

She was wearing a light green waist length coat and a matching tight fitting skirt and a white turtleneck sweater and flesh tone stockings and shiny light green high heel shoes, and her right hand was grasping the strap of her shiny light green shoulder strap handbag which was resting on her right shoulder.

Then Denise got into her light green Rambler and started it up, and then she pulled away from the curb and left her place. Then some of Alex's men got into Denise's place and found the closed circuit TV that you

program to see and hear things from miles around that belonged to Denise and disconnected it and took it with them and left Denise's place and joined the other men, and then all of *those* men took Denise's closed circuit TV that you program to see and hear things from miles around to police headquarters. They had just confiscated Darlene's closed circuit TV that you program to see and hear things from miles around.

The rest of Alex's men followed Denise. Then they drove up to Denise and told her to pull over and one of the men showed her his badge. Denise did what the man had told her to do. Then both men got out of the car and introduced themselves to Denise.

"You're Denise Bainbridge, aren't you?" one of the men asked her.

"Yes," Denise said. "I'm Denise Bainbridge."

Then one of the men took a warrant out of his pocket and showed it to Denise and spoke to Denise: "You're under arrest, Ms

Bainbridge."

"Under arrest," Denise looked and sounded surprised. "On what charge?"

Then the man told her.

Then Denise looked shocked.

More of Alex's men put under surveillance the rest of the people who worked at View who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, the rest of the people that we knew about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, by driving back and forth by their places and talked about other things and not about the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and not about *our* operation to close down the closed circuit TV and theft operations so that the rest of the people who worked at View, the rest of the people we knew about who in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, couldn't hear Alex's men talking about the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and about *our* operations to close down the closed circuit TV and theft operations, until finally they saw

the rest of the people who worked at View, the people of the people that we knew about who in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, leave their places, and then some of Alex's men got into their places and found and disconnected *their* closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around and took them with them and left the places and joined the rest of the men, and then all of the men took the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around to police headquarters. They had just confiscated the TV's.

The rest of Alex's men followed and stopped and arrested the rest of those people who worked at View, the rest of the people were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, the people that we knew about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations.

Melissa and Alex and more of Alex's men and I were driving over to View to arrest Colby and the other people worked at View

and find and confiscate any other evidence having to do with the closed circuit TV and theft operations and to find out if there were hidden rooms at View that were hiding the manufacturing and boxing operations of the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around. I had asked Alex to have some of his men look for the hidden rooms at View while the rest of his men arrest the rest of the people who worked at View, and while I was going to be with Melissa and Alex when Alex arrests Colby.

While we drove over to View, we talked about other things and not about the closed circuit TV and theft operations and not about *our* operation to close down the closed circuit TV and theft operations so that Colby and the other people who worked at View couldn't hear our talking about the closed circuit TV and theft operations and *our* operation to close down the closed circuit TV and theft operations.

We also didn't worry about Colby and the

other people who worked at View seeing Melissa and Alex and his men and me going over to View and being prepared for us. Since they didn't know we were going over to View and why.

When we got here at View, we turned into the parking lot and parked our cars here in the parking lot, and then Alex's men went to the other departments of View and showed the people here their badges and identified themselves to them and showed the warrants for the employees' arrests and told them what they were arresting them for. The employees looked shocked, and the rest of Alex's men looked for any other evidence that had to do with the closed circuit TV and theft operations and the hidden rooms that hid the manufacturing and boxing operations of the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around.

And while all of them were arresting the employees and looking for any other evidence that had to do with the closed circuit TV and

theft operations and the hidden rooms that hid the manufacturing and boxing operations of the closed circuit TV's you program to see and hear things from miles around, more of Alex's men got into the employees' homes and disconnected the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around that the employees owned and took the TV's with them and joined the rest of the men, and then all of the men took the TV's to police headquarters. They had just confiscated the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around that the employees owned.

Colby was here inside his office doing some paperwork; he also wondered why Denise hadn't showed up for work and had called her place, but there was no answer there. He had even left a message on her answering machine.

Alex and Melissa and I came into Colby's office.

Melissa was wearing a light green blouse

and brown pants and black tennis shoes, and her right hand was grasping the strap of her purse, which was resting on her right shoulder, and Alex was wearing a gray tweed coat and a light blue shirt and a black tie and black pants and black leather shoes.

"Arthur Colby?" Alex said to Colby.

"Yes," Colby said. "I'm Arthur Colby."

"Sergeant Bailey, Bellingham Police Department, Robbery," Alex said and showed Colby his badge. Then he took a warrant out of his pocket and showed it to Colby and spoke to Colby again: "I have a warrant for your arrest."

"On what charge?" Colby looked and sounded surprised.

Then Alex told him.

Then Colby looked shocked.

"I think that's what you wanted to keep me from finding out," Melissa said to Colby. "That would explain why you fired me."

"You're joking," Colby said. "You know why I fired you." Then he pulled open the

drawer the ledger that said that Melissa had done a sloppy job on keeping the books had been in. But then he looked surprised when he noticed it wasn't in his desk.

"Looking for something?" Melissa asked him.

Colby didn't say anything. Then he looked at me and spoke to me: "Frank. What are *you* doing here? Aren't you supposed to be at work?"

I had been using my real name when I had been working undercover on my assignment to find out what it was that Melissa wanted to know. Then I spoke to Colby: "I have been working, Art," Then I told Colby what Melissa had hired me to do and what I had discovered and that I had been working undercover on my assignment. Then, Colby looked surprised. "My name *is* Frank Hurley," I then told Colby. "But I'm not a handyman. Instead, I'm a private detective." Then I took my private investigator's license out of my pocket and showed it to Colby.

Then Colby looked disappointed.

Colby and Mears and the other people that we knew about that had to do with the closed circuit TV and theft operations and Melissa and Alex and all of his men and I were here at police headquarters now. Melissa and Alex and his men and I asked Colby and Mears and the people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations who the other people were who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, the ones that we didn't know about. But Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about that had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations didn't tell us. Although we knew that the people who weren't in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations were the other people who worked at the Eshop. They were innocent. The police's putting them under surveillance until the investigation was over had proven that;

and in the course of our investigation, we discovered that everyone who had worked at View had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations as well as Mears and *his* people had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations. And Melissa was the only one who hadn't been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations since she hadn't known about the closed circuit TV and theft operations when she had worked at View, and she still wasn't the only one who hadn't been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, even though she knew about the closed circuit TV and theft operations now, and even though she didn't work at View, anymore now, too.

And now we were going to have to improvise on finding out who these other people were who were carrying out *their* closed circuit TV and theft operations, the ones that Melissa and Alex and his men and I didn't know about.

And I asked Colby and Mears and the

other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations if they and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations had known each other for a long time and if they had carried out all of those theft operations. I still needed to know where Mears and Darlene came in on those theft operations. It looked like Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, had known each other for a long time, and they had carried out all of these theft operations. They didn't answer my question.

Then Melissa and Alex and his men and I asked Colby and Mears and the other people

that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the TV and theft operations more questions, but they didn't answer them.

Later on, we found out from Alex's men who had searched View for the hidden rooms that there *were* hidden rooms at View, and they were hiding the manufacturing and boxing operations of the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around, and that some of the people inside the research department of View had manufactured and had boxed the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around inside those hidden rooms while the rest of the people inside the research department of View had been doing their research work in the lab.

And Alex's men that Alex had assigned to go with Alex and Melissa and me to View and find any other evidence that had to do with the closed circuit TV and theft operations while Alex arrests Colby, and while the rest of

Alex's men he had assigned to find the hidden rooms at View that had hid the manufacturing and boxing operations of the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around had found other evidence that had to do with the closed circuit TV and theft operations; blueprints for the TV's that had been inside the hidden room that had hid the manufacturing and boxing operations of the closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around, and more closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around that had been inside the same room that the other closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around, the same room that the other closed circuit TV's that you program to see and hear things from miles around that Melissa had told me about.

And after Melissa and Alex and his men and I finished interrogating Colby and Mears and the other people that we knew about who

had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, Alex and his men put Colby and Mears and the other people that we knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations in jail.

And then Alex did what we had planned to do about stopping the other people that we didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations since we hadn't been able to find, identify, and arrest them. After that, Alex gave Melissa and me a lift home. Melissa and Alex and his men and I had done what we had to do in the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations. Now I had the opportunity to rest up and recuperate before I wrote the rest of the report on my investigation of what Melissa had wanted to know, *and*, to find out how Melissa owed me, *and*, send her my bill. And I was glad that I was going to be able to rest up and recuperate before I wrote the rest of the report on my investigation of what Melissa had wanted to know, *and* find out

how much Melissa owed me, *and* send her my bill. I was going to need to rest up and recuperate before I write the rest of the report on my investigation of what it was that Melissa had wanted to know, *and*, find out how much Melissa owed me, *and*, send her my bill. It had been a pretty rugged case.

CHAPTER XI

The next day, I was here at my place and sitting inside the living room and sipping coffee and watching the morning news on TV. I wanted to hear about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations.

The TV announcer said what Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations had done and what they were going to do, and now their closed circuit TV and theft operations had been closed down and the things they had stolen had been recovered and returned to their rightful owners, and the airport that Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex

and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations had hid the stolen items in had been shut down, and Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations had been arrested and were in jail now, and View had been closed down. It was now out of business.

Then the TV announcer said that the people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations hadn't been found and identified, and that they were carrying out *their* closed circuit TV and theft operations now.

And while the TV announcer talked about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations, he didn't mention Melissa's name and didn't show her picture and didn't say what Melissa had done for a living and didn't say what her involvement in

the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations was.

And the TV announcer didn't mention *my* name and didn't show *my* picture and didn't say what *I* did for a living and didn't say what *my* involvement in the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations was while he talked about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations, either.

After the TV announcer finished talking about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations, he started talking about something else.

And *I* was pleased to hear about everything I had just heard in the news about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations. Then I wondered what the people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations must be doing right now if they were hearing about the police's investigation of the closed

circuit TV and theft operations right now.

Maybe they were discontinuing *their* closed circuit TV and theft operations right now. They were going to have to. They weren't going to be able to continue them. And maybe they were making sure that no one knows that they had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, too. Because they don't want to go to jail or prison. Because Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations hadn't told Melissa and Alex and his men and me who they were or what they looked like or where they were when Melissa and Alex and his men and I had asked Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations who they were or what they looked like or where they were. Because Colby and Mears and the other people that Melissa and Alex

and his men and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations wanted to save them. They didn't want to take them down with them. Giving *them* the opportunity to do what *they* want to do. And because the people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations didn't want it to be known to the public that they had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations with the rest of the people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations.

For the rest of the day and the next few days, I stopped thinking about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations, and I didn't think about my investigation of what Melissa had wanted to know, and I didn't think about how much Melissa owed me and sending her my bill, and I didn't think about anything else, and I stayed at home and rested up.

A week later, I was here at the office and

writing the rest of the report on my investigation of what Melissa had wanted to know, and then I turned the printer on and printed out the rest of the report on the investigation, and then I put the rest of the report on the investigation into the file on the Rollins termination case, and then I turned the computer and the printer off, and then I put the file into the filing cabinet and locked up the cabinet. Then I sat back down behind my desk so I could find out how much Melissa owed me.

I finished finding out how much Melissa owed me. Now I opened up one of the drawers of my desk so I could take an envelope out of the drawer and put my bill inside the envelope and address the envelope and send the bill to Melissa. I took the envelope out of the drawer, when the phone rang. I picked up the receiver and said hello.

"Hello?" a female voice said. "Is this Frank Hurley?"

"Yes. This is Frank Hurley."

"Mr. Hurley, this is Melissa Rollins,"
Melissa sounded happy. I wondered about
this. She hadn't acted this way before.

"Ms Rollins. How are you?"

"Fine. I'm working again."

"Oh, really?"

"Yeah,"

"Well, I'm glad to hear that you're working
again."

"And I'm glad that I am working again."

"Where are you working now?"

"At a place that makes regular TV's. I'm
working in their accounting department. I
told a friend of mine who owns the place that
makes the regular TV's that I was fired from
View, and he said that he'd see about getting
a job for me. He did."

"Well, that's great."

"Yes, it is. How are *you*, Mr. Hurley?"

"I'm fine,"

"Good. I'd like to pay you."

"Well, it so happens that I just finished
finding out how much you owe me."

"Oh, really? How much *do* I owe you?"

I told her.

"I see," she said after I had finished telling her how much she owed me. "Well, when *can* I pay you?"

"Let me check my schedule."

"All right,"

I looked at my desk calendar. Then I spoke to Melissa again: "Ms Rollins?"

"Yes?"

"You can pay me anytime today."

"Fine. I'll go over there to your office and pay you right now."

"All right. I'll be here."

"Fine," Then Melissa hung up.

So did I, and then I put the envelope back into the drawer of my desk and closed up the drawer. Then I smiled. Now I knew why Melissa was happy; and I think that another reason why she was happy was because she must be over what had happened. That was good.

And when she showed up to pay me, she

looked just as happy as she had sounded happy. She was smiling. The smile was bright. And she was wearing a long sleeve black blouse and cream white pants and cream white tennis shoes, and her right hand was grasping the strap of her purse, which was resting on her right shoulder.

I stood up and smiled to greet her when I saw her come in.

When she reached my desk, she and I shook hands.

"Hello, Ms Rollins," I said to her.

"Hello, Mr. Hurley," she said to me.

Then we sat down. Then she took her checkbook and a pen out of her purse and wrote me a check for the amount of money she owed me for services rendered, and then she gave me the check, and then I looked at the check, and then I smiled. Then I spoke to Melissa again: "Thank you very much, Ms Rollins."

"Thank *you*, Mr. Hurley," Melissa said. "For finding out for me what I wanted to

know."

"Well, I'm glad that I was able to find out for you what you wanted to know. You must be over what has happened. You sounded happy when we talked on the phone a few minutes ago, and you looked happy when you just came in."

"You're right. I am over what has happened. My working again is helping me forget what has happened."

"Well, that's good."

"Yes, it is."

Then I wrote out a receipt for services rendered, and then I gave it to Melissa and told her what it was. Then I spoke to Melissa again: "If you ever need a private investigator again, let me know."

Melissa smiled. "I will," she said. "Well. I gotta be going. I gotta go to work now."

Then Melissa and I stood up and shook hands.

"Thank you for coming in, Ms Rollins," I said to Melissa.

"You're welcome, Mr. Hurley," Melissa said to me. "Bye."

"Bye."

Then Melissa left. And I sat back down behind my desk and looked again at the check she had given me and decided how much of the money I wanted to go into the bank, and how much of it I wanted to go into my wallet.

After I made the decision, I looked at my watch. Eleven thirty three.

I had time to go over to the bank and put into it the amount of the money I wanted to put into it, and the amount of money I wanted to put into my wallet. Then I could go somewhere and get something to eat. I *was* getting hungry. And then I could come back here to the office and wait for new business to come my way. So I left the office and went over to the bank and cashed the check and put most of the money into my savings, and then I put the rest of the money in my wallet, and then I went over to Bob's Burger and Brew to have lunch.

When I got here to Bob's Burger and Brew, I sat at a booth and ordered beer and a hamburger.

I was sipping the beer now. And while I waited for the hamburger to come, I thought about the people that Melissa and Alex and his men and I didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations. I wondered what they were doing right now if they had heard about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations a few days ago.

But whatever they were doing right now, they must not have told anyone that they had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations with the rest of the people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations. Because they don't want to go to jail or prison. Because the other people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations had given them their freedom. And because they didn't want it to be known to the public that they had been in on the

closed circuit TV and theft operations with the rest of the people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations. If they had told someone they had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations with the rest of the people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, the someone would have told the police, and then the police would have arrested them, and then there would be have been news about their arrests, and everyone--including me--would have heard the news.

And I don't think that they're going to tell anyone that they had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations with the rest of the people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, either. Because they don't want to go to jail or prison. Because the other people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations had given them their freedom. And because they don't want it to be known to the public that they had been in on the

closed circuit TV and theft operations with the rest of the people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations. If they will tell someone that they had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations with the rest of the people who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations, the someone will tell the police, and then the police will arrest them, and then there will be news about their arrests, and everyone--including me--will hear the news.

I looked out the window and realized that they were out there, among us, invisible. However, I realized that I must be invisible to them, too. Colby must have told them that I had gone to work at View as a handyman, not knowing the real reason why I had gone to work at View as a handyman, before Alex and his men had arrested Colby and Mears and the other people that Alex and his men and Melissa and I knew about who had been in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations.

I still wondered what the people that Alex

and his men and Melissa and I didn't know about who were in on the closed circuit TV and theft operations were doing right now if they had heard about the police's investigation of the closed circuit TV and theft operations a few days ago.

Maybe they were waiting for the heat to die down before they do something new. Or maybe they were doing something new while the heat was on. Or maybe they were moving away from Bellingham to some other place so they could do something new in that new place. Or maybe they were going straight. Or maybe they were . . .